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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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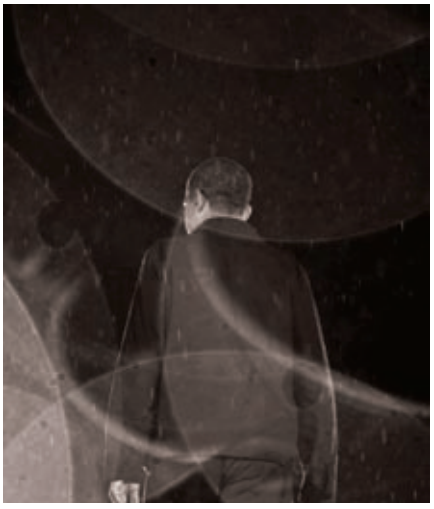
Go For It

Now that Barack Obama has won the presidency, a swath of the Washington establishment is pressing him to answer what it considers an urgent question: How will he scale back his plans—for tax cuts, for health care reform, for education—in response to the economic emergency? Actually, they were incessantly asking that before the election—in each of the three presidential debates, in fact. And even members of his own party have joined the David Gergens and Bob Schieffers in demanding that Obama retrench. This is, to say the least, a bizarre fixation, one that simultaneously misreads economics, politics, and history.



The complaint about Obama's agenda begins with the fact of rising deficits. The argument holds that they necessitate the scaling back of expenditures. This would be a sound argument in decent economic times, but in the early stages of a recession it is madness. Even conservative economists like Martin Feldstein have called on the federal government to spend billions on fiscal stimulus, deficit be damned. That's the surest way to hasten recovery.

Of course, there are good reasons to fret over long-term deficits. They can siphon money from investments that improve the living standards of future generations. But, aside from his stimulus package, Obama's agenda is designed precisely to provide investments that would improve future living standards.

Take his health care reform plan. Sure, it costs money. But spiraling health care costs are also driving up future deficits—a fact that has swung the moderate wing of the party associated with Robert Rubin behind reform. The Rubinites have come to understand that reform isn't an impediment to long-term solvency but a necessary step toward it. We doubt that future generations would thank us if we bequeathed them a sputtering jalopy of a health care system that required ever greater expenditures lest it break down completely.

Obama's first task, then, is to upend the mindless conventional wisdom which holds that he must never implement the agenda he campaigned on. And this will involve straightening out some of his fellow Democrats who believe that he should replicate the fiscal strategy of the early Clinton era, when the administration scaled back its more ambitious spending plans and focused instead on deficit reduction, a choice that laid the groundwork for the boom of the late 1990s. But the analogy isn't terribly apt. By the time Clinton changed tack, the economy was already well on the path to recovering from the recession—a very different situation from the one we now face.

There's another lesson from the Clinton presidency that is being widely misapplied these days. Democrats worry that, if Obama tries to do too much too soon, his first two years in office will end with a Republican rout in the midterm elections—just as Clinton's did. "We moved fast in the 103rd [Congress], and what did it get us?" mused House Majority Whip James Clyburn, who instead advocates, as a *Wall Street Journal* article characterized it, "a pragmatic approach to governance that would begin with items that have proven bipartisan support before tackling ambitious elements such as universal health care."

This utterly misunderstands the nature of the Clinton debacle. Clinton was punished not because he tried to reform the health care system but because he failed. Voters had spent a year listening to Clinton tell them how the health care system was broken; then they spent another year and a half hearing about how he presided over a legislative stalemate. And, as his plan stalled, Republicans managed to portray it in fearful and inaccurate terms.

The politics of health care reform shouldn't be anywhere near that complicated. Instead of dithering over a deal, Democrats need to remind their Republican colleagues of the price the GOP paid for opposing the creation of Social Security and Medicare. Sure, they can oppose this new program as a socialistic nightmare. But they will be forced to spend the rest of their careers defending their vote to deprive voters of health care.

None of this is to say that Obama should abandon moderation or bipartisanship. There are areas for cooperation. Education is one: His support for teacher accountability and flexible hiring practices would attract Republican backing. And he ought to make a point of forming bipartisan coalitions to root out waste in the budget and tax code.

But, in the end, there's probably nothing the Democrats can do to avoid losing seats in 2010. Almost all presidents suffer defeats during their first midterm elections. The greatest risk for Democrats is not that Obama will try to do too much, but that their terror of failure will lead them to waste an historic opportunity. This is not a Clintonian moment. It is more like the moment Lyndon Johnson inherited in 1965, or the one Franklin Roosevelt faced in 1933—a chance to reshape American government. The Democrats have it in their grasp to master the great problems of public life if they can summon their collective nerve. The only thing they have to fear is fear itself. ◆

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Slow Learners

What part of "overwhelming electoral defeat" does the GOP not understand?

JONATHAN CHAIT

A YEAR AND A HALF ago, around the time thoughtful conservatives started to realize that George W. Bush might not in fact be a combination of Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill, *National Review* editor Rich Lowry wrote a cover story pinpointing the source of the president's failings: He had a competence problem. Going forward, Lowry suggested, the party might want a new leader a bit less, well, meatheaded than the incumbent. Republicans would seek out someone who "doesn't run the government like George W. Bush," he predicted—someone "detail-oriented" and "proven (in jobs more demanding than part owner of a baseball team or governor in a state where the office is weak)."

Yet the Republican who has emerged from the wreckage of the 2008 elections having captured the loyalty of the party faithful—Sarah Palin—does not quite fit this description. The base does not appear concerned. "At a recent meeting of conservative activists," writes an approving Midge Decter, "the very mention of her name set the whole room cheering and the women present all but dancing on the tables."

The outpouring of Republican enthusiasm for Palin suggests that the party faithful have not quite digested Lowry's critique of Bush—or, for that matter, any critique of Bush whatsoever. This week, Republicans are holding a series of confabs to plot their way forward. The most popular themes appear to be Palin in particular and the return to a more traditional conservatism in general. A recent, pre-election Democracy Corps poll found that Republican voters, by a two-to-one margin, think their party "needs to get back to Republican issues," as opposed to devising "better ways to make government work for people, make America secure and address new problems." I have seen the future of the Republican Party, and it is the present of the Republican Party. Only perhaps more so.

Among the intelligentsia, a handful of thinkers have started to argue that the failure of the Bush administration calls for a rethinking of conservatism. But the most powerful institutions of the right—Fox News, talk radio, *National Review*, *The Weekly Standard*, the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page, and the major right-wing think tanks—remain firmly in the hands of conservatives who see the events of the last eight years as a vindication of their ideology.

The apologias come in two basic forms. The first holds that Bush is a successful conservative president. To the extent that he's fallen short, it's due to factors beyond his control, the venality of his enemies, or his inexplicable failure to publicize his many triumphs. Proponents of this line of thinking often find Bush's unpopularity baffling. "It may be that his administration will end up winning a war, keeping the country safe, and presiding over decent economic growth—and people will still disapprove of Bush," wrote *Standard* editor Bill Kristol earlier this year.

The economy is a particular source of mystification for the right—or, at least, it was until a few months ago. "If things are so bad, why are they so good?" asked puzzled CNBC host Lawrence Kudlow last year, before concluding, "[W]e're virtually guaranteed of a Goldilocks soft landing or better—and certainly not a recession." Kristol, again, boasted a year ago, "The Bush tax cuts have been thoroughly vindicated."

Why did the public not see this? Conservatives reject the obvious explanation for widespread economic pessimism throughout the Bush years—i.e., the unprecedented lack of wage growth for all but the very rich—in favor of exotic theories about media bias or Iraq war fatigue darkening people's view of the economy. And, they insist, the subsequent financial collapse was not a function of Bush-era policies, but merely bad luck.

The second defense of the Bush years takes the opposite view, holding that Bush was both unconservative and unsuccessful. Indeed, by this increasingly popular analysis, Bush failed *because* he strayed from the true faith. For instance, in his 2008 *Weekly Standard* cover story "The Politics of a Failed Presidency," Jeffrey Bell blamed Condoleezza Rice for being too "deferential to outside and internal opponents of Bush's policies" and Bush for not making his tax cuts permanent. (How he could have secured the necessary 60 Senate votes, Bell did not say). If only Bush had *really tried* being a tax-cutter and foreign policy neocon!

But to these critics Bush's primary ideological apostasy is that he supposedly presided over vast new spending increases. Both Democrats and Republicans have gleefully taken up the charge—the former in order to discredit Bush, the latter to shield conservatism from the stench of his failure. It's a trumped-up indictment. Bush did spend generously on defense and homeland security, with conservative approval, but domestic discretionary spending actually declined from 3.1 percent of GDP to 2.8 percent. It is true that Bush approved a vast new prescription drug benefit. But 89 percent of Americans believed in 2000 that Medicare should have such a benefit. Bush's critics on the right have no explanation for how he could have gotten elected in 2000 without promising one or reelected in 2004 without following through. Still, the critique has taken hold. The Democracy Corps poll found that, by a 17-point margin, Republicans attribute their party's failures in 2006 and 2008 to its insufficient conservatism. (Voters as a whole attributed it to excessive conservatism.)

The enthusiasm generated by Palin shows that the party intends, wittingly or not, to replicate not just Bush's policies but his whole operating style. She is the most Bush-like figure conceivable. Jeb Bush would be a far more dramatic departure from the incumbent than her. Her utter lack of interest in policy, her obsession with certitude ("you can't blink, you have to be wired in a way of being so committed to the mission"), her folksiness masking incoherence—all reflect the style of The Decider. The way Palin filled her government with grossly unqualified high school cronies eerily apes even the Bushian qualities that many conservatives have come to regret.

Conservatives even defend her just as they defended Bush, by swatting away any qualms about her qualifications or intellect as coastal snobbery toward regular folk. After Palin's nomination, Lowry wrote, "[T]here's a tone of contemptuous dismissiveness about the experience that she does have—fueled no doubt by her career in 'fly-over country.'" Contemptuous dismissiveness? Lack of experience? Conservatives may not realize it, but another George W. Bush is exactly what they want. ◆

TRB
From Washington

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Contents

November 19, 2008

The Editors	1	**GO FOR IT** *Why Barack Obama should spend and deliver.*
		TRB
Jonathan Chait	2	**SLOW LEARNERS** *What part of "overwhelming electoral defeat" does the GOP not understand?*
		THE MALL
Alan Wolfe	5	*Obama buries the Southern strategy.*
Jonathan Cohn	8	*The Democrats' secret health care plan.*
Zvika Krieger	10	*The Minutemen turn on each other.*
James P. Rubin	11	*Russian aggression and the genocide excuse.*
		FEATURES
	14	**THE O-LIST** *Thirty people who will rule Obama's Washington.*
John B. Judis	20	**AMERICA THE LIBERAL** *The Democratic majority: It emerged!*
Noam Scheiber	23	**OBAMA'S CHOICE** *The next Larry Summers or . . . Larry Summers.*
Michael Crowley	26	**THE SHADOW PRESIDENT** *How John Podesta invented the Obama administration.*
		BOOKS AND THE ARTS
Stanley Kauffmann	28	**FILMS FINDING OUT** *Jeanne Moreau extends her reign; a filmmaker's letter to a dead boy.*
Sam Tanenhaus	30	**BOOKS THE IMPERIAL VICE PRESIDENCY** ***Angler: The Cheney Vice Presidency*** *by Barton Gellman*
Stephen Dunn	32	**POEM THE REVOLT**
Steven Hahn	34	**BOOKS THE DISCOVERY OF PRIDE** ***Negro with a Hat: The Rise and Fall of Marcus Garvey*** *by Colin Grant*
Paul Starr	39	**BOOKS WELCOME TO THE PARTY** ***On the Side of Angels: An Appreciation of Parties and Partisanship*** *by Nancy Rosenblum*
Jenna Weissman Joselit	42	**BOOKS PASTE AND FUTURE** ***Scrapbooks: An American History*** *by Jessica Helfand*
Alexander Nemser	44	**BOOKS THE LONELY WORKMAN** ***Descartes' Loneliness*** *by Allen Grossman*
Sam Taylor	47	**POEM SONG: INFERNAL**
		WASHINGTON DIARIST
Leon Wieseltier	48	**THAT NIGHT**

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Dixie Shtick

Obama buries the Southern strategy.

THERE CAN BE no beginning without an ending. Everyone seems to agree that Barack Obama's victory marks a new chapter in American political history. What is not so obvious is that it ends not just one era, but two.

First, of course, Obama's victory brings the movement toward racial equality that grew out of the Civil War to its logical political conclusion. The Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, by guaranteeing every citizen equal protection under the laws, institutionalized modern liberal democracy as we know it. But its promise remained long unfulfilled. Women did not achieve equal citizenship rights with men until 1920 and the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. And it would take until 1965 before the Voting Rights Act made it possible for African Americans to put the ideals of the Fourteenth Amendment into actual practice throughout much of the South.

It is one thing for African Americans to have won the right to vote. It is another for an African American to win 52 percent of the national vote. It has been only 43 years since 1965. That one country could experience so much racial progress in so short a period of time is testimony to its resilience and openness.

Still, the forces that have long opposed racial justice and equality in this country are by no means dead. The single most disturbing aspect of last night's election is the transformation of the Republican Party into the party of the Confederacy. Yes, Republicans remain strong in states such as Wyoming and Idaho, and Obama won Virginia and is leading in North Carolina. But both these latter two states flipped to the Democrats because they contain large numbers of white professionals who moved there from other parts of the country and because blacks came out to vote in such force. Long-time Southern whites, by contrast, opposed Obama—those in the Deep South most of all. Despite having lost the Civil War and having been instructed by the laws of the land to treat members of both races equally, large parts of the South resisted—and they continue to resist.

Fortunately for Obama, and for the rest of us, the senators and House members elected from these die-hard regions are in the minority, incapable of stopping a Democratic president from pursuing his agenda. In addition, their numbers will continue to shrink as companies move in looking for cheap labor and their kids move out looking for better opportunities. Some holdouts in the Old South may never give up, but it no longer matters. Not long ago, these kinds of people, driven by their parochial obsessions with racial superiority, ran the country. Now they will be a remnant. Perhaps they will be able to control the Republican Party for the next electoral cycle or two, but the white South has finally lost its privileged position in American political life; Jesse Helms's Senate seat is now held by Kay Hagan. Like all those who lose their privileges, especially those who never earned them in the first place, they are unlikely to show much grace, despite the effort by John McCain, in his concession speech, to point the way. Obama would do well not to try to win them over but to ignore them. They have for too long been a malignant force in American political life, and we should not miss their passing.

THE SECOND ERA to close with Obama's victory is the one that began with the Newt Gingrich–

Sarah and Joe rehearse for 2012.

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led attempt to impeach Bill Clinton, one of the most irresponsible acts in U.S. political history. It was Gingrich, and not Karl Rove, who will ultimately be viewed as the man who perfected the kind of polarizing politics that Obama insists he will end. Gingrich and his many followers had persuaded themselves that Clinton's election was illegitimate, and they brought to American politics a level of extremism so far outside the boundaries of consensus politics that it worked for a short period of time. We have been living with the poison they unleashed ever since.

The era launched by Gingrich has ended in part not because Obama beat McCain, but because he first defeated the Clintons. Many of us, myself included, now recognize that Obama's victory was made possible because Hillary roughed him up in the primaries. We owe her that, just as we owe both Hillary and Bill thanks for campaigning on Obama's behalf. But, even if Hillary had won the nomination and the presidency, the ugliness of the impeachment fight would have found a way to return—repressed and covert, perhaps, but no less ugly. It is not just that we needed a new face. We also needed a new name. All this is unfair to Hillary Clinton, but no one ever said that politics was fair.

Even more importantly, Obama defeated the politics of polarization in the general election—and he did so convincingly. By calling Obama every name in the book of dirty politics, McCain and Sarah Palin soiled themselves and left him clean as a whistle. Obama does have a policy mandate: He has promised to tackle health insurance and to bring the troops home, and he must try to deliver. But he has a political mandate because of the way he campaigned: The major theme of his speeches, from the early ones to the victory oration last night, is that we can do better than a negative politics of attack-and-respond. That other senator from Illinois fought the Civil War. This senator from Illinois ended the culture war.

Not completely, of course, for there is still the issue of gay marriage, a cause evidently lost in California last night—in large part because so many African Americans, inspired by the Obama campaign to vote, voted against it. Yet, as a nation, we are at our worst when we fight over culture war issues; if she did nothing else, Palin proved that. To stop doing so, we need appeals to our better nature. None of the other Democratic candidates could have done a better job of urging us to redeem ourselves than Obama, because none of the other candidates was black.

Race has long been our major division, and all our other divisions play off its script. From the culture war's first manifestation in the guise of a Nixonian emphasis on law and order, through debates about teenage pregnancy and promiscuity, down to affirmative action, the culture war was a replay of earlier conflicts between black and white. Whether tensions were fueled by Southern politicians denouncing welfare or Al Sharpton threatening disruption, those who made race central to their outlook did not mind a little polarization here and there. This is where Obama's coolness became essential. It took someone whose race was once a symbol of being at the bottom to lift us all over the top.

The debate will now center on how Obama should govern. On that question I would rather follow his lead than give him advice, at least for now. He has not only won an election, he has put us in touch with our history. There will be plenty of time for the criticism later. We are still reeling from an administration that played to our fears, never acknowledged its mistakes, ignored our best traditions, and shredded our moral values. We deserve a moment to feel proud once again. Barack Obama has offered it. What more could one ask for in an election?

Alan Wolfe

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Surgical Prep

The Democrats' secret health care plan.

If you believe what the pundits are saying, enacting universal health insurance in the next year won't be difficult: It will be impossible. As the argument goes, it would cost too much money, antagonize too many interest groups, and—given the difficulty of finding 60 votes in the Senate—require too much raw political muscle. Even before Barack Obama won the election, allies were advising him to stay far away from major health care legislation, lest he fail as miserably as Bill Clinton did when he famously tried for universal coverage back in 1994. As one anonymous Democratic senator recently told *New York* magazine, "Health care is a quagmire."

But not everybody thinks 2009 has to be a repeat of 1994. Since June, staff members from three key Senate committees—Budget, Finance, and Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions—have been meeting regularly to map out a health care strategy for the coming year. They've formed three working groups: one focused on expanding insurance coverage, one focused on improving the system's functioning, and one focused on financing a new initiative. They've also been meeting with officials representing almost every key stakeholder involved in the health care debate, from doctors to insurers to consumer advocates to employers. The goal of these meetings has been to develop a common vision among Senate Democrats for what universal health care should look like—and how to pass it. Although the discussions still have a ways to go, a rough consensus is starting to take shape.

According to multiple participants in the process, the final proposal will probably resemble the initiative Obama touted on the campaign trail. People who like their insurance could keep it; others could buy coverage through a cooperative, like the one federal employees use, in which insurers couldn't exclude people with pre-existing conditions. There would be subsidies, so that everybody could afford a plan, plus serious efforts to restrain future growth in health spending so that the actual price of insurance would start to come down.

Agreement is also emerging over a rollout strategy. It would kick off as early as this month, when Max Baucus—whose reputation for bipartisan compromise makes him an unlikely vessel for liberal ambition—introduces a white paper outlining reform options for universal coverage. Afterward, if all goes well, he and Ted Kennedy—who helped drive the process from Massachusetts, where he is receiving treatment for brain cancer—will craft a full-fledged bill. The idea, according to a senior staffer, would be to introduce the measure early next year, after the inauguration: "We intend to push for health care out of the box," the staffer says.

Of course, drafting a proposal is relatively easy. Passing one—well, that's another story. But Baucus himself confirms what staffers have been saying for months: Assuming Senate Democrats can find some common ground on reform, they would consider using the budget reconciliation process to enact it.

This is a crucial development. The rules of reconciliation limit debate, restrict amendments, and prohibit filibusters. It's the one time a simple majority of 50-plus-one votes—rather than the 60 it takes to break a filibuster—can definitively pass legislation. It's a brass-knuckles way to move legislation and, as such, nobody's first choice. But, if the Republicans won't negotiate, Baucus has told me, the Democrats might have to use it. "My first preference is always to work together with my [Republican] colleagues to get legislation done," Baucus says. "When that's not possible, I'll find another way."

None of this makes universal coverage a done deal. The emerging consensus over principles and strategy could still break down over details, such as how to pay for the subsidies or whether to create a new public insurance program, modeled on Medicare, into which anybody could enroll. Baucus and Kennedy would also have to find common ground with colleagues who are supporting an alternative, bipartisan bill Oregon Democrat Ron Wyden has spent the last two years promoting. And that's just in the Senate. Over in the House, discussions are more embryonic and scattered; although traditional champions of reform like John Dingell, Pete Stark, and Henry Waxman are ready to go, Nancy Pelosi and her leadership team may not be.

But Obama can push them, and he would be well advised to do so. Notwithstanding all the knee-jerk pessimism, the environment for health care reform is a lot more favorable than it was in 1994. And, while taking on health reform in the first year would still pose political risks for the Obama administration, so would delaying it.

One reason the specter of 1994 looms so large is the memory of all the trouble Clinton had trying to make his health care proposal pay for itself—a challenge that Obama and his allies must also overcome. But what those who fear reform forget is the key role the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) played in that drama—and the fact that it's not likely to play the same role this time.

CBO is Washington's official scorekeeper for legislation. Using economic models, CBO predicts the cost or savings that any new proposal will generate. Congress then uses those figures as the baseline for debate. In 1994, CBO was run by an economist named Robert Reischauer. Although smart and well-respected, Reischauer had little faith in claims that the Clinton plan could generate savings—and little patience for working out better alternatives. "[Reis-

David Cowles

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chauer] was like your law professor," says one staffer. "You gave him your homework and sat there biting your nails, waiting for the grade to come back."

Today, CBO is under the management of Peter Orszag, an economist whose obsession with health care is the stuff of wonkish legend. Convinced that skyrocketing medical expenses will eventually drag down the country's living standards, he's called for comprehensive reform and consulted with lawmakers as they try to craft workable packages. He's no pushover. But, when Wyden submitted his bill earlier this year, CBO concluded that the proposal would eventually pay for itself—a pretty clear signal that Orszag won't be reprising Reischauer's role if he gets the chance to weigh in on comprehensive reform this year.

CBO isn't the only player in the debate likely to be more constructive than it was in 1994. Groups like the National Federation of Independent Businesses, which played a key role in undermining the Clinton initiative, have been talking up reform this time around, introducing their own schemes and approaching lawmakers with an open mind. (Representatives of another lobbying group recently told me, "If we're not at the table, we'll be on the menu.") Perhaps more significant, during this year's campaign they didn't spend heavily to defeat pro-reform Democrats. In fact, health care industry groups gave more money to Democrats this cycle than to Republicans—a sign that, for now, they want to exert influence from the inside.

To be sure, industry's influence is a mixed blessing at best; drug-makers and insurers could very easily undermine reform from within. But, to do that, they'll have to fight reform's allies, who are off to a conspicuously early start. During the Clintoncare fight, labor and other would-be allies didn't engage until very late in the game, after the measure's defeat was all but certain. (Labor had spent most of 1993 fighting Clinton over the North American Free Trade Agreement.) This time, the allies didn't even wait for the election. Over the past year, both the Service Employees International Union and Health Care for America Now, a newly formed advocacy group, have been running campaigns that, together, will pour tens of millions of dollars into advertising, education, and grassroots organizing. These groups aren't fighting for just any old form of universal coverage. They're after something similar to what Democrats have in mind. Reinforcing these efforts are campaigns by such groups as the American Medical Association, AARP, and American Cancer Society. These campaigns have raised the visibility of health care while endorsing the principle of universal coverage, if not any specific variety of it.

But it's more than new money these groups are bringing to the table. It's also a new attitude. It's easy to forget now, but in the run-up to the Clinton fight most of Washington—indeed, most of the United States—thought health care reform was inevitable. Pro-reform interest groups approached the debate in the same way, focusing relentlessly on their narrow interests. This time around, nobody takes reform for granted. "Groups are coming in with less of an attitude that it's our way or no way," says one staffer who's been present for some of the discussions. "What we're getting from these stakeholders is, we want something to happen, we know you won't do it just the way we recommend, but we want to be positive and we to be there with you."

Not coincidentally, the same attitude seems to be prevailing among members of Congress. In 1994, reformers were fervent but seemed unable to agree on what reform should be. A sizable block wanted to create a single-payer, government-run system; another group favored a system based on private insurance, like the Clintons were proposing; a third group didn't even want to pursue universal coverage. This time around, many traditional single-payer proponents have indicated they could get behind a proposal like Obama's because it would at least offer people the option of a government-run plan and, perhaps, evolve into a single-payer system someday. Meanwhile, the bill attracting centrist interest, Wyden's, is far more ambitious than its 1994 counterparts. Among other things, it would cover virtually everybody right away, something even Obama's own proposal wouldn't accomplish.

IT'S EASY TO SEE how the emerging consensus could break down as the congressional Democrats settle on details. Asking businesses to contribute more money toward the cost of their workers' insurance or changing the regulations that allow large employers to set benefits however they choose would antagonize many

My Lame-Duck To-Do List, by George W. Bush

Finally learn Portuguese (such a beautiful language).

Read a NIE.

Go to a liquor store and ask for some spare boxes.

Call Chertoff, change top level on chart to "Threat Level: GEORGE."

Grow a mustache. A strong mustache. A good mustache.

Read Suze Orman's book; fix economy.

Find out what "cloture" means.

Get to know my new black friend, Barack Obama. See if he wants to start a few weeks early.

Remove the letter "O" from all White House keyboards. Hehe.

Twenty-second Amendment loophole? Get Yoo to draft memo.

Post-presidential plans . . . the finalists: "I'm clearin' brush." "I'm going to find some brush and clear it." "See that brush over there? Gonna clear it." "I'm ohn clear sum bruush." "Me? Just clearin it. The brush, I mean." "Me. Brush. Clear. What part of that don't you understand?"

Stephen Sherrill

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industry groups. Reducing the tax subsidy for generous insurance plans would alienate some unions. Creating a public plan would be a deal-breaker for insurers, who think it could drive them out of business. Subjecting new treatments to strict tests for cost-effectiveness would rankle drug and device makers. And so on. Including most or all of these provisions in reform could stir up opposition or disappoint supporters, producing a dynamic similar to the one that ultimately undid the Clinton plan.

But that's no reason for Obama to think small. More expansive bills give sponsors more opportunities to trade component pieces as part of the negotiation process. (Rahm Emanuel, the shrewd House member who may become Obama's chief of staff, has been known to make this very argument.) Bigger proposals also tend to generate more enthusiasm, an essential prerequisite for passage. As one veteran health care strategist notes, "With incremental measures, nobody cares enough to push it, and it's easier to kill things people don't want."

Obama and his allies also need to realize that delaying action on health care is a gamble of its own. People tend to forget that Clinton didn't talk about health care that much during his first presidential campaign. He didn't even sketch out his vision for reform until less than two months before Election Day (and even then it was vague). Obama, by contrast, laid out his reform proposal more than 17 months ago, when the Democratic primary campaign was just getting started. As a result, he's talked about health care a great deal—and in explicit terms. He's vowed to deliver universal coverage, or something approximating it, by the end of his first term. And, in recent weeks, he's indicated very clearly that health care was among his top three priorities. If he fails to deliver on that promise, voters will notice—and judge him harshly for it.

The good news is that all the talk about health care has put Obama in a perfect position to push it. He can legitimately claim his election is a mandate for that change. No, health care reform didn't work in 1994. That doesn't mean it can't work this time around.

Jonathan Cohn

Time's Up

The Minutemen turn on each other.

Aliso Viejo, California

Jim Gilchrist, the founder of the Minuteman Project, lives in a one-story home in a gated community in Orange County. On a late August afternoon, the 59-year-old former accountant invited me into his backyard, which is strewn with potted plants, blue-and-white pinwheels, and a ladybug wind chime. "There are some Pakistani immigrants that live over there," he says, pointing over his fence, "and a nice Japanese family, and a Taiwanese family that lives around the corner. It's a great neighborhood."

Gilchrist, who has spent the past four years of his life trying to keep immigrants out of the country, is an unlikely booster for ethnically diverse neighborhoods. But, these days, it seems he would rather spend time in the company of immigrants than with his fellow anti-immigrant crusaders. "I get more hate mail from members of my own movement, from so-called Minutemen, than from the open-border people," he confesses. The only border that he regularly visits is the one between his own yard and his neighbors'. "I'd be wary of going down to the border myself these days," he says. "I'm worried about what [the Minutemen] would do with a sidearm."

This was supposed to have been a good year for Gilchrist and his Minutemen—not one where their guns were drawn on one another. Last November, Michael Barone predicted on *RealClearPolitics* that 2008 would be a "watershed" year for immigration, with candidates that take a liberal stand sure to find themselves "out on a pretty flimsy limb." Pundits labeled the presidential nominating contest the "Lou Dobbs Primary," with both CNN and NPR devoting a disproportionate amount of time to the issue in their early debates. Tom Tancredo and Duncan Hunter ran almost solely on the strength of their hardline immigration stances, and even John McCain briefly flirted with "secure our border first" rhetoric.

But, after clinching the nomination, McCain became more moderate on the issue, and immigration became one of the few issues over which "Obama [and] McCain [are] in agreement," as a *Los Angeles Times* headline declared earlier this year. The downturn in the economy further diverted voters' attention. Asked to rank the importance of immigration alongside seven other issues in a Gallup poll in June, voters ranked it dead last.

In this environment, Gilchrist's movement is falling apart, overtaken by new members whom he describes as "troublemakers with personality disorders and criminal propensities." In contrast, he insists that the group's original members were able to give voice to the immigration concerns of ordinary Americans because they demonstrated "a passionate allegiance to the United States of America and its priceless principles." There is no doubt that the Minutemen—aided by sympathizers in the media like Lou Dobbs—drove the national conversation in 2005. But whether the enormous wellspring of American anger over illegal immigration that they claim to have tapped into actually existed is another question.

Passing beneath a tulip-decorated sign that reads, "welcome friends," Gilchrist takes me into his dimly lit garage, where he has hung a collage of blurry photographs. Gilchrist spent 13 months as a Marine infantryman in Vietnam, where he received a Purple Heart. "Here we are hiking through the Laos border," he says, pointing at one of the photographs. "This guy was killed by a sniper. . . . Not a day goes by that I don't think about my time there."

Gilchrist's experience in Vietnam helped him organize a small army of volunteers to fan out across the Arizona border with Mexico in search of illegal immigrants in early 2005. For his border patrol, Gilchrist rounded up six pilots, three airplanes, a fully staffed three-bed hospital, two rifle-wielding recon units of former Marines and Army Rangers ("which I handpicked"), two armed sentries, and hundreds of ground troops looking out for figures in the night.

Though the group fell far short of the "potentially several thousands" of volunteers it boasted in press releases, journalists showed up to watch in droves—there were, in fact, so many of them that, during evening patrols, Minutemen confused reporters with immigrants trying to cross the border. Dobbs hosted a number of segments with the group's leaders, and, at a rally near the border, Tancredo sung the group's praises: "You are heroes, with each one of you representing hundreds of thousands of Americans."

The press eagerly latched on to the Minutemen as representative of those hundreds of thousands of supposedly angry Americans as the battle over comprehensive immigration reform heated up on Capitol Hill. "The majority of

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Americans are fed up with illegal immigration and want something done about it," declared Bill O'Reilly, who hosted Gilchrist numerous times. "Three cheers for the Minutemen!" Sean Hannity, toting night-vision cameras, went on border patrols multiple times with the Minutemen, trips he then used to scold McCain, one of the bill's primary backers. "It's a devastating problem down there," he told the senator.

Minutemen today fondly reminisce about this brief, golden period of influence. Luca Zanna, co-founder of the Mohave County Minutemen, breathlessly recounts the time he spent on the border with Gilchrist and his fellow activists. "That spontaneity, that independence—it was beautiful," he says. "When you control the show, you decide what will be on the show. We had that for a moment."

After we leave his garage, Gilchrist gives me a tour of his house. The kitchen counter is piled high with copies of his 2006 book, *Minutemen: The Battle to Secure America's Borders* (co-written by Jerome Corsi, author of the recent bestseller *The Obama Nation*). As we talk, he fidgets with his cordless phone as if awaiting an important call. But the only one that comes in during the course of our two-hour conversation is from his mechanic. "TV has dropped off, radio dropped off a bit, newspapers quite a bit," Gilchrist admits. "Nobody cares about immigration anymore."

By 2007, Congress had failed to pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill, and press interest in the Minutemen began to ebb. Its 15 minutes of fame up, the group splintered as a result of ego-driven battles between Gilchrist and the group's other founder, Chris Simcox. Gilchrist is locked in a battle over control of the group stemming from allegations that he misappropriated $400,000 in donations. Simcox closed chapters and fired leaders in a half-dozen states last year after they questioned his management and financial accountability.

This year, there has been more evidence that, while immigration remains a legitimate issue, the supposed nationwide furor was a product of media hype. With the congressional debate over and the press increasingly ignoring the Minutemen, most Americans are professing moderate views on the issue. As of June, the percentage of Americans who want to reduce immigration levels has fallen within a percentage point of the 20-year low, while 64 percent of those polled say that immigration is a good thing for the country (the second-highest it's been since September 11). Even on Super Tuesday, the height of the presidential primary, exit polls found almost 60 percent of Republican voters favoring immigration policies that Lou Dobbs would deride as "amnesty."

Jim Gilchrist, Minuteman-in-chief, outside an anti-immigration rally in 2005.

AP PHOTO/JIM LAURIE

Gilchrist, of course, doesn't see it this way. The original Minutemen weren't some radical fringe creating anger and fear where none existed. They represented mainstream America and the defense of the American dream. "Bring us your tired, your hungry, your poor—legally," he says, narrowing his steely blue eyes as if at imaginary illegal immigrants.

But even Gilchrist, sitting at his kitchen breakfast nook with pie-wielding Mammy salt-and-pepper shakers and a tablecloth decorated with Sambo-style figures eating watermelon, has concluded that most of the people left in the anti-immigration movement are "xenophobic, racist, schizophrenic, wackjob ne'er-do-wells." He's having a difficult time raising even half the money he raised in 2006. And his legal budget, which he was saving to fight "organizations that were violating [immigration] law," has been tied up with cases against members of his own movement, amounting to over $200,000 in legal fees. His most recent suit was against someone using the Minuteman name to release a video "encouraging people to shoot illegal aliens to death with a rifle and bury their bodies in the desert." He wears a bullet-proof vest at public events to protect himself from his own onetime supporters.

Gilchrist, his face leathered from spending days under the scorching desert sun, takes a drag of a Pall Mall cigarette as he ponders the unforeseen turn his movement has taken. "Twenty, forty years from now, my name may pop up in the history books. It may say, 'He was all wrong—Loon Gilchrist, he caused this,'" Gilchrist says. "Or because of what I did, 'He preserved our strength as an economic and world power.'"

But it's more likely that Gilchrist and even his breakaway followers will end up causing nothing at all. Enrique Morones, the founder of the San Diego–based immigrant advocacy group Border Angels recently arranged a 300-person prayer vigil for supporters of immigrant rights. An urgent "call to action" by the Minutemen yielded only one counter-protester.

Zvika Krieger

Red Herring

Russian aggression and the genocide excuse.

Why did Russia *really* invade Georgia? In late September, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov appeared before the Council on Foreign Relations in New York and offered a rather stunning explanation. Lavrov—who previously spent a decade as Russia's ambassador to the United Nations, where he mastered the body of international precedents and U.N. Security Council resolutions that together make up the de facto law of nations—informed his audience that, by attacking Georgia, Moscow was implementing a principle endorsed by the Security Council in 2006: the "responsibility to protect."

Lavrov was referring to the U.N.'s new legal justification for intervention in the internal affairs of a member state. The concept—which arose out of the world's failure to stop genocide in Rwanda—en-

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visions nations joining together to protect potential victims of mass human rights abuses or genocide, even if that means trampling on the sovereignty of another country by using military force. The inaugural test of this new principle came in Darfur. To date, no nation, including the United States, seems willing to live up to this "responsibility." But Russia, according to its foreign minister, is now doing exactly that. "If all this talk about 'responsibility to protect' is going to remain just talk," Lavrov said, "if all this talk about human security is going to be used only to initiate some pathetic debate in the United Nations and elsewhere, then we believe this is wrong. So, we exercised the human security maxim. We exercised the responsibility to protect."

Russia had previously accused Georgia of committing genocide against South Ossetia—despite the fact that the most reliable independent reporting has concluded that fewer than 100 civilians died during Georgia's initial incursion into the region. On August 30, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said Georgia's goal was the "extermination of the peaceful population in South Ossetia" and asked, "What is this if it's not genocide?" None of this—the accusation of genocide, the invocation of "responsibility to protect"—was an accident. For it was the threat of genocide against Kosovo's Albanians that prompted NATO, led by the United States, to initiate military action against Russia's ally Serbia in 1999. Now, Russia is seeking to turn the tables—to exploit the human rights rhetoric of the West in order to establish international acceptance for a sphere of influence in Central Asia and other parts of the former Soviet Union. On September 12, Russian President Dmitri Medvedev made the analogy explicit: "There is certainly no serious argument which would allow one to … separate the process of the recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia from the decisions taken with regard to Kosovo."

According to the International Crisis Group, the United States and Europe are "struggling to come to terms with Russia's attempts to portray its support for breakaway regions in Georgia as a mirror image of what they did in Kosovo." It shouldn't really be such a struggle. For the truth is that Moscow's comparison is nonsense. Kosovo was all about moral intervention. Georgia is all about geopolitical resentment. It is imperative that the West not fall into Russia's analogy trap.

At least since the presidency of Woodrow Wilson, America has been the world's leading champion of self-determination. Russia, on the other hand, is rarely the first stop in a fledgling nation's campaign to win international recognition. Nor is Moscow a top destination for human rights campaigners trying to drum up support for action to stop ethnic cleansing, mass murder, or genocide. Indeed, until Georgia's attack on South Ossetia prompted a Russian invasion of Georgia itself, Russian foreign policy has been marked by a preference for the inviolability of national borders and a downright reluctance to support international action, especially military action, in the service of human rights. What's changed is that, after Georgia's offensive against South Ossetia this August, Moscow saw an opportunity to lock in an analogy to Kosovo—an analogy that was extraordinarily misleading.

It is crucial to remember that, when the crisis began in Kosovo in the late '90s, there was remarkable unanimity among the major powers—the United States, key European governments, and, yes, even Russia. Having lived through the Serbo-Croatian war and the slaughter in Bosnia, the international community initially acted in unison to confront Slobodan Milošević.

Throughout 1998 and up until NATO's military campaign began in March 1999, Moscow joined with Washington and key European countries to pressure the Serbian government. Working together, Russia, Europe, and the United States imposed severe economic sanctions on Serbia and drafted an agreement largely intended to protect the Kosovar Albanians from Belgrade's security forces. Indeed, Russia's foreign minister, Igor Ivanov, frankly admitted to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright that the threat of force might be necessary to convince Milošević to avoid an all-out onslaught against the Albanians. (He obviously hoped the mere threat of force would be sufficient, since Russia eventually opposed NATO's bombing campaign.)

Russia's position at the time is relevant for two reasons. First, while Moscow often quibbled about the details, it largely accepted the Western view that Serbian forces had committed massive human rights abuses against Bosnian Muslims and that the Albanians were at risk of being similarly slaughtered. Second, throughout the crisis, Moscow worked hand in hand with the West to forge an outcome that protected the Albanians. Russia supported U.N. Resolution 1244, which ended the war, eliminated Belgrade's legal control over Kosovo, and even spelled out a path to self-determination.

Today, of course, Russia regards Kosovo as a festering wound to its national pride. Obviously, something happened over the last ten years. And, while Milošević is gone, the Albanians have their freedom, and Serbia's democracy has been moving in the right direction, the change is not in the Balkans; it is in the foreign policy of Putin's Russia.

At the beginning of the Putin era in 2000, Kosovo was not a particularly contentious subject between Moscow and the West. Although Russia supported Belgrade's position that Kosovo's future status should be a matter of international negotiation, it largely agreed that the oppression of the Kosovar Albanians at the hands of Serbian authorities justified Kosovar demands for self-government. The issue for Moscow was not whether Kosovo would ever again be under the rule of Belgrade. Rather, the question was when and how self-government would come about—that is, whether it would ultimately take the form of full independence or some lesser degree of autonomy.

It was only after the breakdown in relations between Moscow and Washington in 2003 and 2004 that Russia began to harden its position on Kosovo. With Putin fuming that Washington had gone to war in Iraq over his objection—and believing that his cooperative stance on Afghanistan and the war on terrorism was not reciprocated—Russian policy toward the United States took a turn for the worse.

An early victim of this policy shift was the U.N.-sponsored plan for resolving the Kosovo issue. That plan was developed and implemented over three years by Marti Ahtisaari, the former Finnish president and just-named winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. The Serbs remained intransigent, and Moscow rejected the Ahtisaari plan. With the patience of most of the world exhausted, Washington and key European countries decided to proceed despite Moscow's opposition, recognizing Kosovo as an independent country in February of this year.

If nothing else, this history demonstrates that the international community—including Russia—was largely unified during a decade of diplomatic engagement. And the risk of massive human rights abuses was real and generally accepted. The case of South Osse-

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Top: Russian tanks invade border regions of Georgia in August. Right: Inhabitants of a South Ossetian village flee their homes as Russian warplanes bomb residential buildings in nearby Gori.

FROM TOP, BRUNO STEVENS; ROBERT KOWALEWSKI/AURORA PHOTOS

tia could not be more different. Human rights, let alone genocide, have never been a major factor in international decision-making there. And, as for the United Nations's decision to endorse Russia's peacekeeping role in the disputed regions of Georgia, this was a matter of pragmatism, not an international stamp of approval for Russian policy. (With the U.N. peacekeeping system discredited and weak, the international community has, by default rather than by design, begun to rely more and more on regional powers and institutions to bear the burden of tamping down regional conflicts.) In short, Russia's attempt to link South Ossetia to Kosovo has little basis in either history or reality.

Moscow has been quite open about its desire for freedom of action, if not hegemony, along its borders. Indeed, when he was U.N. ambassador, Lavrov himself tried his hand at great-power horse-trading with then-Ambassador Albright—suggesting in the mid-'90s that, if Russia supported the U.N. peacekeeping force needed to prop up a failing democracy in Haiti, then Moscow should be able to count on U.S. support for Russia's peacekeeping mission in Georgia. More recently, Medvedev, in presenting his country's latest comprehensive foreign policy statement, described Russia as having a "privileged interest" in developments along its huge Eurasian border. But, until its fateful decision to launch an invasion of Georgia, Moscow had limited itself to non-military measures—for example, subjecting Ukraine to the manipulation of energy prices and supplies.

Now, however, Russia has crossed a geopolitical Rubicon. In response, the international community and the West must take extreme care not to ratify Moscow's claims of special rights or privileges in its border regions by legitimating its calculated, phony rhetoric about genocide and human rights.

Predictably, some prominent American strategists are already worried that the backlash against Russia will go too far. Henry Kissinger, for example, recently opined on the need to understand—though not accept—Russia's point of view on South Ossetia. Certainly, the Bush administration could have done more to work in partnership with Russia after Putin's commendable decision to support America's response to September 11. Nor was it necessary to rush forward with deployments of missile defenses in Eastern Europe. And I would be the last to defend Bush's flawed diplomacy in the run-up to the Iraq war. But even hinting at the validity of Moscow's absurd analogy between South Ossetia and Kosovo is a recipe for disaster. It would not only dishonor the memories of the real victims of genocide in countries like Rwanda, Bosnia, and Cambodia; it would also give credence to Russia's campaign for privileged rights in the former Soviet Union. And, in the long run, that could jeopardize the freedom of the smaller countries—among them, several nascent democracies—that line Russia's border.

We can be realistic without succumbing to realism. America and Russia share a large number of common interests; we can and should work together on non-proliferation, climate change, terrorism, and the Middle East peace process.

But we must also see to it that Russia pays a heavy price for its use of force in August. Fortunately, this is already happening. Moscow's diplomatic isolation is nearly unanimous. Even before the financial crisis struck last month, Russia's market was collapsing as a result of the Georgian war, making a mockery of Putin's boast that Moscow would soon be the world's financial center. In conjunction with the Putin era's domestic assault on political parties, the press, and civil society, the invasion of Georgia has done long-term damage to Russia's reputation. It will be a long time before Russia is considered a responsible power—notwithstanding Foreign Minister Lavrov's ruminations about the responsibility to protect. *James P. Rubin*

James P. Rubin teaches at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs. He was an assistant secretary of state during the Clinton administration.

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THE O-LIST

The 30 People Who Matter Most

In the spring of 2007, long before Sarah Palin became a feminist icon, before Jeremiah Wright and Bill Ayers reared their unreconstructed heads, before Hillary Clinton ever questioned his readiness to be president, Barack Obama's greatest nemesis was a 29-year-old paralegal named Joe Anthony. Anthony had attracted tens of thousands of fans to a MySpace page he'd set up for Obama—a testament to the legions of new voters the candidate was inspiring. But, back in Chicago, all Anthony's site inspired was indigestion. The Obama brass worried about ceding control of the campaign's image to the online hordes. And so, after a brief attempt at coordination, they had MySpace put Anthony out of business.

In the annals of U.S. history, Gettysburg this was not. But the episode was a harbinger of things to come. The campaign spent much of the primaries stiffing prominent blogs and online groups while vacuuming up their readers and members. This spring, after Obama's claim on the nomination became more or less ironclad, the campaign discouraged donors from giving to the 527 groups that had flourished since the late 1990s—effectively defunding much of the party's independent infrastructure—and asked those same 527s not to buy TV ads. (The campaign wanted donors concentrating dollars on Obama.) Then, in June, Obama announced he was moving many Democratic National Committee operations to Chicago, an unprecedented swallowing of the party apparatus.

The consolidation had some obvious short-term effects. For example, it made the party's message far more cohesive—and its mechanics more efficient—than ever before. (Back in 2004, the Kerry campaign frequently duplicated the efforts of the DNC and various independent groups.)

But the consequences extend far beyond the recent election. Simply put, the president-elect has led a revolution within the Democratic Party, replacing an establishment long dominated by Clintonites—and, more recently, by progressive bloggers and billionaires—with a new establishment, one constructed in his own ubiquitous image. This list represents our attempt at making sense of the new hierarchy—your guide to the men and women who will dominate progressive politics in the Age of Obama. (A note about methodology: We fashioned this list from dozens of background conversations with the consultants, bureaucrats, politicos, pollsters, and strategists whose livelihoods depend on their sixth sense of the Washington power structure. There are sure to be quibbles with the ranking—and perhaps some of the names. But it represents, in the main, a broad professional consensus. That said, let the carping begin!)

Obama has led a revolution within the Democratic Party, creating a new establishment in his own ubiquitous image.

Just consider a few ways the new White House will be able to bypass the traditional intermediaries. As of Election Day, Obama had north of three million intensely loyal donors and perhaps some ten to 15 million online supporters, most of whose point of entry into politics was the Obama campaign itself. Whenever the new president decides to engage on a particular issue—health care, anyone?—Robert Gibbs, his likely counselor or communications director, and David Plouffe, his would-be political director, will be able to instantly summon a millions-strong army to mau-mau legislators and the media.

For that matter, the press may suffer a fate worse than mau-mauing. The Obama campaign's grassroots strength made it less reliant on the press than any in recent memory. It's hard to imagine that changing once you add the megaphone of the White House. Shut out and with no Bush to bash, stalwarts of the emerging lefty media—such as the employees of MSNBC president Phil Griffin—could easily turn on their hero.

Or take fund-raising. It's been estimated that, if Obama wanted to back a statewide candidate, he could raise $3 million with a single e-mail. That's against anywhere from $100,000 to $1 million from MoveOn.org, the reigning online champion, according to the blogger Matt Stoller.

Already, it's hard to find a newly elected Democrat in Washington who doesn't partly owe his seat to Obama's money and machine. Even Democrats from conservative Southern districts—a perennial nuisance to incoming presidents—owe some of their expanded ranks to the massive black turnout Obama attracted. How do these people resist when Obama (or, more precisely, Obama fixers like Valerie Jarrett and Pete Rouse) comes looking for votes?

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It's certainly tough to imagine them feeling overly solicitous of the Capitol's current powerbrokers—people like Harry Reid and Chuck Schumer. Instead, it will be men like Rahm Emanuel and Dick Durbin—legislators with longstanding ties to Obamaland—who chart the party's course on Capitol Hill. (As of this writing, Emanuel is the favorite to be White House chief of staff.)

The Old Washington dons who matter most under Obama are likely to be those refugees from the establishment who signed up with him early. The inner circle of former congressional leader Tom Daschle chafed at the way the Clintonites clung to power deep into the Bush era. Daschle endorsed Obama in February of 2007, and now he's a candidate for a top administration job. John Kerry's closest supporters still seethe at the slights they believe he suffered at the hands of the Clintons. Many of Kerry's top fundraisers and policy aides now populate Obamaland. The senator himself, who gave Obama a critical endorsement in January, is a candidate for secretary of state.

Which is not to say the old establishment will be shut out entirely. Far from it. The federal government is simply too vast, and Obama's existing reservoir of manpower too shallow, to govern without them. (Obama is distinctly lacking in cronies he could plausibly install in the top echelons of his administration.) Indeed, if Obama fails to impose his will on Washington, the labyrinthine bureaucracy will likely be the place he falls short. He'd hardly be the first self-proclaimed outsider to overlook how a well-connected deputy assistant secretary can bring an entire administration to its knees.

The Clintonites in particular will have outsized influence in Obama's bureaucratic ranks, given how much of the party's economics and foreign policy know-how resides with them. That helps explain why Larry Summers and Tim Geithner, two protégés of Robert Rubin, Clinton's economic godfather, are leading candidates to head the Treasury Department. And why former Clintonites like James Steinberg and Greg Craig may end up running Obama's national security apparatus.

The catch is that the reborn Clintonites have largely accommodated themselves to the Obama era, rather than vice versa. For example, in the '90s, Rubinomics meant balanced budgets and freer trade. Summers has spent the last few years sounding the alarm about wage inequality and raising questions about the current system of international trade.

In many ways, Obama's takeover represents another triumph of the campaign's central strategic insight: that it's always easier to tilt the landscape to your advantage than to charge into unfriendly terrain. In early 2007, the Obama brain trust realized it had little chance of besting Hillary Clinton in Iowa if traditional caucus-goers were the only ones who showed. So it resolved to expand the electorate by tens of thousands of more sympathetic Iowans—young people, liberals, independents.

In the same way, Obama hasn't seized power from the traditional Democratic establishment so much as created a new on-the-ground reality—almost ten million newly registered voters, in addition to all those donors and online supporters—that has remade American politics. That rustling sound you hear is the last of the last of the old-time party hacks rushing to get on board. *Noam Scheiber*

Brooks Kraft

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David Axelrod
Chief strategist, Obama campaign

1 At first, he professed no interest in trailing his guy to Washington. But that's increasingly hard to believe. That doesn't mean Obama's message manager will follow the Karl Rove path, surrendering his lucrative consulting business for an official post. He might take the James Carville tack: work for the DNC but be omnipresent in the Oval Office. Although Axelrod doesn't do policy, his knack for strategy will shape the key decision of the administration: Will Obama go for broke or play it safe? And there's little doubt he'll always have four digits on his mind: 2012.

Rahm Emanuel
House member, Illinois

2 He could be the Dick Cheney of the Obama administration—the heavy with his hands in everything. Like Cheney, Rahmbo is respected, feared, and a formidable wonk. Emanuel might make an attractive chief of staff because of his reputation for fierce loyalty and his ability to corral the House Democrats. Those in Congress who don't owe their jobs to him are terrified of him. That pick, like so much of Obama's world, would bear Axelrod's fingerprints: Ax signed the ketubah at Emanuel's wedding.

Valerie Jarrett
CEO, Habitat Co.; senior adviser, Obama campaign

3 The rap on Obama is that he's low on hardcore loyalists capable of serving in top positions. That's what makes Jarrett so essential. During the campaign, they spoke daily—and she served as strategist, ambassador, and enforcer. With Obama's increasing reliance on old Washington—and Clinton—hands, he'll need at least one guardian of his interests in the room. There's talk of making her secretary of Housing and Urban Development, but trouble at some Habitat-managed housing projects could make her confirmation hearing messy. Obama is more likely to want her floating around the White House.

Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House

4 If Obama fails early, the unruly House Democrats would be the most likely cause. Conservative Dems—and they are plentiful these days—will want Obama to balance his budgets; liberals will be aching for maximalism on all fronts; and 2010-focused worrywarts in the leadership will cry for caution. That means the fate of Obama's presidency will largely rest with Madame Speaker's disciplinary skills. Fortunately, she's a *true* pitbull with lipstick. More fixer and tactician than San Francisco idealist, she will haunt the backrooms, cutting deals and threatening to cut off legs.

Tom Daschle
Former Senate majority leader, South Dakota

5 The former majority leader didn't just bet early on Obama; he lent him his establishment imprimatur and his entire political operation, which proved to include some of the campaign's most innovative strategists. Since leaving the Senate, Daschle has turned himself into a health care maven. He may not have won the chief of staff job he so coveted—his wife's lobbying made for terrible optics—but he could still end up in the White House, or as secretary of Health and Human Services. Either way, he's sure to be among the central figures in shaping one of Obama's top priorities. (And his wife won't be hurting for clients.)

Larry Summers
Managing director, D.E. Shaw & Co.

6 The best economic mind in the party, his credibility with the Democratic base has grown in recent months. His must-read columns in the *Financial Times* have evinced a leftward turn in his thinking. And, unlike Rubin, the financial meltdown actually reflects well upon his last tour in Washington. If Obama doesn't send him back to Treasury—that job could also go to his protégé, Tim Geithner—he might be called upon to replace Bernanke at the Fed in 2010.

General David Petraeus
Commander, U.S. Central Command

7 Petraeus is a master politician—hence the buzz about him running for the White House someday. For the past few months, he has been back-channeling to Obama, building a working relationship. It helps that their positions on both Afghanistan and Iraq have begun to converge. The surge's success has bolstered Petraeus's cred, so Obama will want the general's blessing for his strategy—or, at least, try to avoid a public confrontation with him. An antagonistic relationship would propel Petraeus to the top of the GOP's wish list for 2012.

Joe Biden
Vice president–elect

8 Biden has eschewed the fool's errands that doom most vice presidents: Reinventing government! Regulatory reform! He has given himself a Cheney-size portfolio and wants to have the president's ear on *everything*. His most obvious area of interest will be foreign policy, where his views run more hawkish than Obama's. An interesting first test of Biden's clout: Can he find jobs for like-minded Democratic diplomats like Richard Holbrooke and Dennis Ross?

Robert Gibbs
Communications director, Obama campaign

9 If the press corps doesn't exactly love the guy, who cares? He has run a leakproof ship, won overwhelmingly positive coverage of his candidate, and proved a steely spinmeister on television. He should have Karen Hughes–like stature in the White House, as communications director or senior counselor. Gibbs joined up with Obama back in 2004, well before the hype began, and the laconic Southerner is famously fearless when dispensing advice to his boss.

David Plouffe
Manager, Obama campaign

10 Obamaland is a hegemonic power—it devours every institution it cannot control. Plouffe is the political geek who built it from scratch, with his savant-like knowledge of demographics and electoral rules. Now that Obama controls the lever of government, that campaign apparatus isn't going anywhere. He could become the DNC's new executive director—or run the White House political operation. Whether he's at 1600 or not, count on Plouffe to bolster the administration's legislative agenda by using Obama's massive donor base to reward friendly congressmen.

John Podesta
President and CEO, Center for American Progress

11 How convenient that the head of the transition happens to have his own wonk-filled think tank! His Center for American Progress (CAP) has been prepping the talent and white papers for a Democratic administration for the past five years (see "The Shadow President," page 26, for more on CAP). Though the ex–Bill Clinton chief of staff has said he'll return to CAP after the

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↓ *from top:* 1, 11, 5, 6, 24 ↓ 2, 7, 10, 18, 26 ↓ 9, 22, 3, 8, 4 ↓ 16, 25, 14, 20, 21

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transition, he'll have protégés in every corner of the administration. (That his brother is a top Democratic lobbyist earns him bonus power points.)

James Steinberg
Dean, Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs

12 You don't know him. But he could be the guy running your foreign policy—or, at least, the National Security Council. A veteran of the Clinton NSC, he doesn't court the press, write many op-eds, or even live in D.C. (He's been teaching in Texas for the last three years.) But he's a trusted technocrat whom Obama increasingly leans upon. If Kerry lands at State, he could be an important counterweight, pushing Obama in a more centrist direction.

Pete Rouse
Chief of staff, Obama's Senate office

13 After Tom Daschle's defeat in 2004, he gifted Obama his savviest veteran staffer—perhaps the most effective aide on the Hill. Rouse, a legendary workaholic, helped Obama navigate his brief time in the Senate with an eye toward launching his presidential bid. After he finishes overseeing the transition, Rouse will likely return to the Hill—this time as Obama's top lobbyist.

Jason Furman and Austan Goolsbee
Economic policy director and chief economic adviser, Obama campaign

14/15 The twin lobes of Obama's economic brain. Professor Goolsbee has the economic chops, but doesn't always get politics (witness his legendary NAFTA gaffe). Furman, a protégé of Robert Rubin, is the cream of the Democratic policy-wonk crop—and, unlike most other tax nerds, he's politically canny. Both are essentially centrists—Furman has defended free trade and even (*sacre bleu*!) Wal-Mart—but the policies they've helped author during the campaign have earned Obama the trust of the left. In Obama's efforts to dig out of the recession, they'll design the shovels.

Dick Durbin
Senator, Illinois

16 It was telling that Obama asked Durbin to introduce the biggest speech of his career, back in Denver. Along with Claire McCaskill, he is the president's staunchest ally in the Senate, a total loyalist. That's a good thing for Obama, because the well-liked Durbin is the second most powerful Democrat there. Durbin will confront one problem with the Senate Democrats: They all believe they have more experience than that upstart president.

John Kerry
Senator, Massachusetts

17 According to the rumor mill, Kerry traded his primary endorsement of Obama in return for the secretary of state gig. That would be a selection bound to provoke controversy with moderate Democrats, not to mention Republicans eager to frame Obama as soft. (Kerry wasn't tough enough to defend himself from the Swifties!) If he doesn't join the administration, the omnipresent surrogate could become head of the Senate banking committee—and the author of legislation creating the next regulatory state.

Eric Holder
Former deputy attorney general of the United States

18 His role in the pardoning of Marc Rich and the Elián González fiasco made him a favorite whipping boy of the right. But he's racked up serious wise-man points since serving as Clinton's deputy attorney general, getting tapped for all sorts of supersensitive missions—from investigating Michael Vick's dog-fighting for the NFL to co-heading Obama's veep search. Could a Justice Department appointment be far behind? The man known as "The Heartthrob" at U.S. Superior Court during his prosecutor days will need all his charm during that confirmation battle.

Andy Stern
President, Service Employees International Union

19 The only real powerhouse left in the House of Labor, he has kept SEIU growing as other unions shrank. His people endorsed Obama early, and, with his man in the White House, Stern stands to be the go-to guy on issues of economic security. The animating notion of Obama's domestic policy is the creation of an economy that rewards work instead of wealth. Stern will be making sure that his hard-working union members get what Obama owes them.

Hillary Clinton
Senator, New York

20 Many people suspected she would do the bare minimum, and no more, to elect her erstwhile rival. By energetically stumping for Obama, she put those fears to bed. But how will she play the next four years? She can transform herself into a latter-day Ted Kennedy, a legislative maestro. (Thanks to Podesta, she'll have plenty of her former worker bees in top administration positions.) Or she can wait to see if Obama falls on his face, positioning her for one last run at the White House.

Tim Geithner
President, Federal Reserve Bank of New York

21 One way or another, he'll be crucial to remaking the U.S. financial system—either at the Treasury Department or from his current perch. A smooth operator who's made humility his disarming modus operandi, he'll be called on to craft reforms and then sell them to Wall Street. The banks might get rolled, but at least they'll feel like they've been heard. (See "Obama's Choice," page 23, for more on Geithner.)

Al Gore
Chairman, Alliance for Climate Protection

22 Obama may have run on the greenest platform in decades, but the former veep took pains not to get too involved in the campaign—a reticence that may point to his skepticism of Obama's environmental bona fides. That means an EPA slot or climate-czar role looks unlikely. Instead, he'll be the looming conscience of the party: If Obama edges away from his promise to pass a stringent cap on greenhouse gases, the Goreacle could use his new $300 million grassroots "We" campaign to publicly push him back to the green.

Greg Craig
Senior foreign policy adviser, Obama campaign; partner, Williams & Connolly

23 One of the most loyal Clintonistas—he was Bill's lawyer during impeachment and served in his State Department—and one of the first to defect to Obama, Craig added insult to injury when he offered a devastating point-by-point rebuttal to Hillary's inflated claims of foreign policy experience (sniper fire, et al.). He's such a true believer that Obama calls him a "Kool-Aid boy"—and now he's on the shortlist for jobs as prized as White House counsel or national security adviser.

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Nicolas Sarkozy
President, France

24 Sarkozy's chief ambition is to make France powerful again. And he's found *l'Américain* to partner with. After Sarko's rapturous meeting with Obama in July ("You must want a cigarette after that," Maureen Dowd teased Obama), Mr. Pro-America became even more pro-Obama. (Key bonding point: They are both sons of immigrants who busted ethnic monopolies on power.) Sarkozy is poised to be to Obama as Blair was to Clinton and Bush—the first foreign leader consulted in an international crisis, the honored guest at the most lavish state dinners. One potential hitch: According to *Haaretz*, Sarko doesn't especially like Obama's plans for sitting down with Tehran.

Cassandra Butts
Senior adviser, Obama campaign

25 Funny who you can meet in the financial aid office. During his first year at Harvard Law, Obama hit it off there with Butts. Twenty years later, this Hill veteran (Butts advised Dick Gephardt) signed up as Team Obama's all-around domestic policy guru. Working from her outpost at CAP, she already has played a big role in doling out jobs in Obamaland. Now, one could be coming her way: chief domestic policy adviser.

Julius Genachowski
Co-founder and managing director, Rock Creek Ventures

26 Obama has advisers he trusts deeply (Valerie Jarrett) and ambassadors to the D.C. establishment (Tom Daschle), but precious few people who overlap in these sets. That's why he needs *Harvard Law Review* pal and former FCC staffer Genachowski, who's been a key adviser and fund-raiser since the start of Obama's political career. It's widely assumed that Obama will name his tech-savvy friend, who was also a top exec at Barry Diller's Internet company, to be chairman of the FCC, or to the newly created cabinet position of chief technology officer.

Joel Benenson
Founding partner, Benenson Strategy Group

27 Not that many folks in Washington had heard of the New York–based pollster before the Obama campaign. (Like Axelrod, he used to be a daily newspaper reporter.) But he edged aside a crowded internal group to become a regular presence in debate prep and strategy sessions. Despite Obama's loud protestations that he pays little attention to polls, Benenson will remain in Axelrod's tightest circle.

Susan Rice
Senior foreign policy adviser, Obama campaign

28 She latched onto the campaign early—and took to the airwaves to defend it often. A Rhodes Scholar, former State Department hand, and soft-power evangelist, she opposed the Iraq war—a stance that alienated her from many of her old comrades in the Clinton administration. Because of the longevity of her relationship with Obama, early money had her trodding the path beaten by another African American woman named Rice to national security adviser. But some question whether she's too ideological to play the role of honest policy broker—a concern that might steer Obama toward placing her in a top job at the State Department instead.

Penny Pritzker
Chair, Classic Residence by Hyatt

29 Every president gets one freebie cabinet appointment to install a best pal. Bush stuck Don Evans at Commerce. Chatter has the Hyatt Hotel heiress filling that role. She was an early Obama patron—causing some of his old Chicago rivals to portray him as a puppet of the Jews. This race, Obama's national finance chair did her own version of the great schlep, vouching for him with skeptical *bubbes* and *zeides*.

Phil Griffin
President, MSNBC

30 He's the man who unleashed Olbermann and Maddow—and made MSNBC the left's answer to Fox. It's been ratings gold, but the Obama administration poses a slew of knotty dilemmas: Will Olbermann and Maddow defend the administration against its critics? Or will they fulminate when it inevitably disappoints Obama's lefty fans? By all accounts Griffin, recently described as a "hippie," isn't exactly a disciplinarian. Olbermann once declared, "Phil thinks he's my boss." ◆

By Jonathan Cohn, Michelle Cottle, Michael Crowley, Eve Fairbanks, Franklin Foer, Bradford Plumer, Noam Scheiber, J. Peter Scoblic, Ben Wasserstein, and Jason Zengerle.

The Buddy List

Marty Nesbitt
Founder and CEO, Parking Spot

Barack's BFF shares the same sports obsession (basketball), the same neighborhood (Hyde Park), and the same backyard BBQ pal (Valerie Jarrett). While Nesbitt, Obama's campaign treasurer, delivered the bucks, his wife, Anita Blanchard, who is Michelle's obstetrician, delivered the kids.

Dr. Eric Whitaker
Executive vice president at the University of Chicago Medical Center

Yet another intimate from Obama's days at Harvard, from which the good doctor earned a degree in public health. A frequent trail traveler, Whitaker is said to be adept at reading Obama. Think of him as an early warning system for Barack's bad moods.

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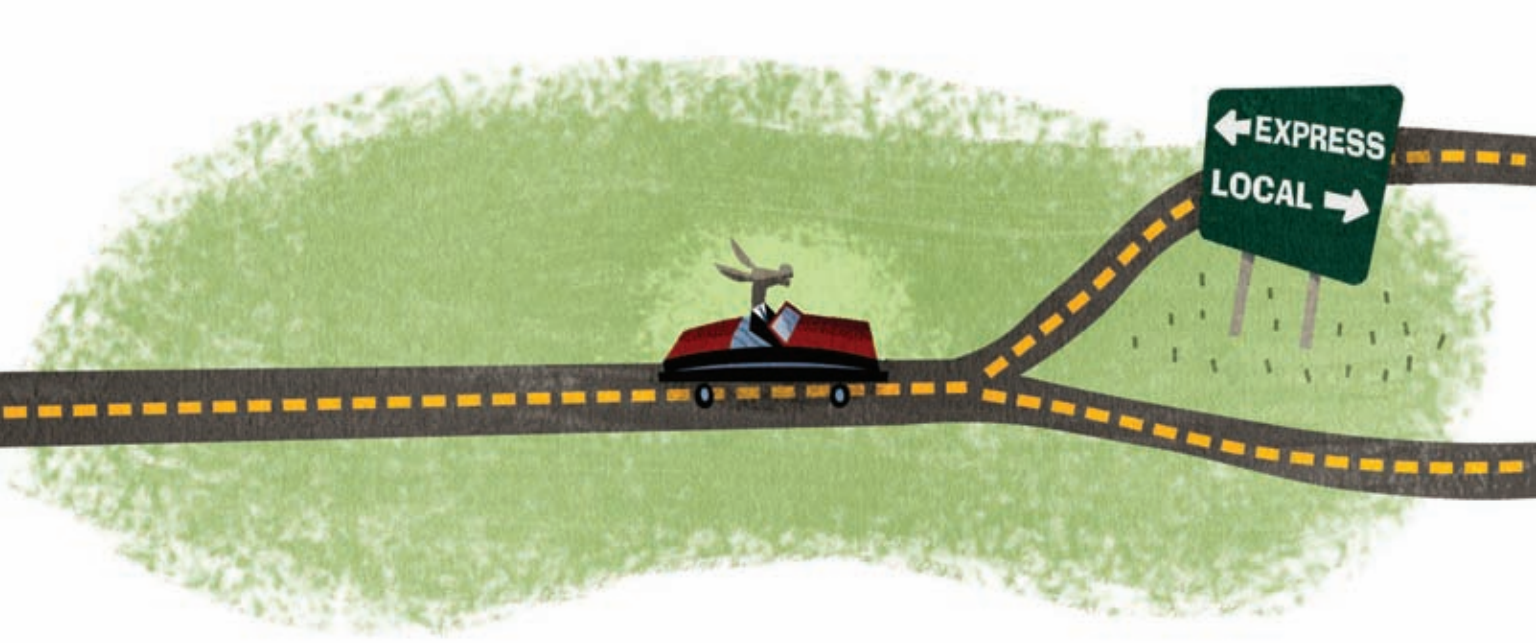
America the Liberal

The Democratic majority: It emerged!

JOHN B. JUDIS



Even before the final results showing a Democratic sweep were in, Washington's pundits were declaring that nothing had really changed politically in the country. In a cover story labeled "America the conservative," *Newsweek* editor Jon Meacham warned that, "[s]hould Obama win, he will have to govern a nation that is more instinctively conservative than it is liberal." Meacham's judgment was echoed by Peter Wehner, a fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center. "America remains, in the main, a center-right nation," Wehner wrote in *The Washington Post*.

These guys—and the others who are counseling Barack Obama and the Democrats to "go slow"—couldn't be more wrong. They are looking at Obama's election through the prism of Jimmy Carter's win in 1976 and Bill Clinton's victory in 1992. Both Carter and Clinton did misjudge the mood of the electorate. They tried unsuccessfully to govern a country from the center-left that was moving to the right (in Carter's case) or that was only just beginning to move leftward (in Clinton's case)—and they were rebuked by voters as a result.

Obama is taking office under dramatically different circumstances. His election is the culmination of a Democratic realignment that began in the 1990s, was delayed by September 11, and resumed with the 2006 election. This realignment is predicated on a change in political demography and geography. Groups that had been disproportionately Republican have become disproportionately Democratic, and red states like Virginia have turned blue. Underlying these changes has been a shift in the nation's "fundamentals"—in the structure of society and industry, and in the way Americans think of their families, jobs, and government. The country is no longer "America the conservative." And, if Obama acts shrewdly to consolidate this new majority, we may soon be "America the liberal."

Realignments—which political scientist Walter Dean Burnham called "America's surrogate for revolution"—are not scientifically predictable events like lunar eclipses. But they have occurred with some regularity over the last 200 years—in 1828, 1860, 1896, 1932, and 1980. The two most recent realignments were essentially belated political acknowledgments of tectonic changes that had been occurring in the country's economic base. In the case of the New Deal, it was the rise of an urban industrial order in the North; in the case of Reagan conservatism, it was the shift of industry and population from the North to the lower-wage, non-unionized, suburban Sunbelt stretching from Virginia down to Florida and across to Texas and southern California.

The new Democratic realignment reflects the shift that began decades ago toward a post-industrial economy centered in large urban-suburban metropolitan areas devoted primarily to the production of ideas and services rather than material goods. (In *The Emerging Democratic Majority*, Ruy Teixeira and I called these places "ideopolises.") Clustered in the regions that have undergone this economic transition are the three main groups that constitute the backbone of the new Democratic majority: professionals (college-educated work-

David Cowles

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ers who produce ideas and services); minorities (African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans); and women (particularly working, single, and college-educated women).

As late as the 1950s, professionals were the most Republican of all occupational groupings, but they were also relatively small in number—about 7 percent of the labor force. Today, professionals (who are the brains, so to speak, of the new post-industrial economy) make up 20 percent of the labor force and are a quarter or more of the electorate in many northern and western states. They range from nurses to teachers to TV producers to software programmers to engineers. They began voting Democratic in 1988 and have continued to do so ever since.

Using census data, Teixeira and I calculated that, between 1988 and 2000, professionals voted for the Democratic presidential candidate by an average of 52 to 40 percent. I don't know exactly what percentage of professionals voted for Obama this week because exit polls don't include professionals as a category. Still, as an approximation, I can use a somewhat smaller (and maybe even slightly more conservative) group: people with advanced degrees. Obama won these voters by a whopping 58 to 40 percent. He even won college graduates as a whole, 50 to 48 percent. (It may be the first time that a Democrat has ever accomplished this. In 1996, for instance, Clinton, even while beating Bob Dole handily, failed to carry college graduates.) Moreover, if you look at states Obama carried and compare them to the states that have the highest percentage of people with an advanced degree, you find that he won the top 19 states—*all of them*, which together account for 234 electoral votes. He also won 21 of the top 24, accounting for 282 electoral votes. McCain, by contrast, won the six states that have the lowest percentage of people with advanced degrees.

As for minorities: Most—with the exception of Cubans, Chinese-Americans, and Vietnamese-Americans—have voted Democratic since the 1930s. But, with the shift of the economy and the liberalization of immigration laws, the number of Latinos and Asian Americans has expanded. Some of the new immigrants are professionals, but others form the working class of the post-industrial economy. They are orderlies, child-care workers, janitors, fast-food cooks, and servers. As late as 1972, minorities accounted for just 10 percent of the electorate. In this election, they made up 26 percent. Blacks, of course, went overwhelmingly for Obama, but he also won Hispanics by 66 to 31 percent and Asians—who as a group used to split their vote between Democrats and Republicans—by 62 to 35 percent.

Women, too, were once disproportionately Republican—in 1960, Richard Nixon won the women's vote. But their voting patterns began to change as they entered the labor force. In 1950, only one-third of women worked; today, 60 percent of women work, making up 46 percent of the total labor force. Over 70 percent of working women have white-collar jobs, and 24 percent work as professionals—compared to 17 percent of men. In 1980, women began disproportionately backing Democrats, and the trend has continued. This year, Obama enjoyed a 13-point edge among women voters and only a one-point edge among men. He carried working women by 21 points. If you add these numbers to the Democrats' advantage among professionals and minorities, that is a good basis for winning elections.

To be sure, Obama and the Democrats needed to win about 40 percent of the white working class that used to be the bulwark of the party's New Deal majority. The recession and financial crisis certainly helped bring these voters home. But the heart of the new majority is no longer blue-collar workers. While the ranks of professionals, minorities, and working women are growing, the traditional white working class is shrinking—having already gone from 58 percent of the workforce in 1940 to 25 percent in 2006, according to Teixeira and Alan Abramowitz.

The new electoral map that has emerged from these demographic trends is, in some ways, the mirror image of the one generated by Republican William McKinley's 1896 presidential victory—with the Deep South now Republican rather than Democratic, and the Northeast now Democratic rather than Republican. (Vermont, today thought of as a left-wing Democratic bastion, voted for only one Democratic presidential candidate before backing Bill Clinton in 1992.)

And yet the geography of the new Democratic majority is not quite so straightforward. That's because, while the post-industrial economy is obviously strong in traditionally liberal areas like Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco, it has also taken root in parts of the South and West—areas like Charlotte (a financial center) and the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill research triangle in North Carolina, the northern Virginia suburbs, Orlando and South Florida, and the Denver-Boulder region. This helps explain why North Carolina, Virginia, Florida, and Colorado all shifted from red to blue in this election.

The rise of these voting groups within the post-industrial economy has brought in its wake a new political worldview. Call it "progressive" or "liberal" or even "Naderite" (for Ralph Nader the consumer advocate, not the misbegotten presidential candidate). If unionized industrial workers were the vanguard of the New Deal majority, professionals are the vanguard of the new progressive majority. Their sensibility is reflected in the Democratic platform and increasingly in the country as a whole. It has sometimes been described as socially liberal and fiscally conservative, but that doesn't really get it right. Professionals are generally liberal on civil rights and women's rights; committed to science and to the separation of church and state; internationalist on trade and immigration; skeptical of, but not necessarily opposed to, large government programs; and gung-ho about government regulation of business, especially K Street lobbyists.

Many are children of the 1960s and '70s—heavily influenced by Martin Luther King Jr., Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, and Nader—but their views are clearly reflected in succeeding generations of college-educated Americans, particularly the "millennials" who grew up during the administrations of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. UCLA's annual study of incoming college freshmen across the country found in 2006 that 28.4 percent identified themselves as "liberal"—the highest percentage since 1975.

If you compare Americans' attitudes from the 1970s and '80s with attitudes today, you can see how much the worldview of these professionals has already permeated the electorate. In March 1981, two months into the Reagan administration, a *Los Angeles Times* poll found that 54 percent of Americans thought there was "too much regulation of business and industry" and only 18 percent thought there was "too little." By October 2008, 27 percent thought there was "too much" and 45 percent thought there was "too little." In a Pew poll released in March 2007, 83 percent backed "stricter laws and regulations to protect the environment," and 66 percent supported "government guaranteeing health insurance for all citizens, even if it means raising taxes."

Attitudes on social issues have also changed dramatically. The Pew poll from March 2007 found that the percentage of

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Americans who believe that school boards should have the right to fire gay teachers fell from 51 percent in 1987 to 28 percent. Those who want to make it "more difficult" for women to obtain abortions dropped from 47 to 35 percent. Those who think that "it's all right for blacks and whites to date each other" rose from 48 to 83 percent. The poll also found that 62 percent of the general population—and 83 percent of college graduates—disagreed with the notion that "science is going too far and hurting society."

These opinions had become prevalent in the 1990s; but September 11 and the fear of an imminent terrorist attack temporarily revived the conservatism of the 1980s, especially on social issues. (As I wrote in The New Republic last year, there is strong psychological evidence suggesting that a heightened fear of death pushes people toward traditional views on social questions.) Today, however, seven years removed from September 11, liberal views have re-emerged with a vengeance. Now, the coming recession seems likely to push voters even further left. And how Obama handles the economy will go a long way toward determining whether the new Democratic majority that has swept him into office proves to be a fleeting phenomenon or a durable one.

There have been two kinds of realignments in American history—hard and soft. The realignments of 1896 and 1932 were hard: They laid the basis for 30 years of party dominance, periods when the same party would win the bulk of national, state, and local elections. (During the New Deal realignment, from 1932 to 1968, Republicans controlled the presidency for only eight of 36 years and Congress for only four years.) The conservative Republican realignment of 1980, by contrast, was soft: It began in 1968, was interrupted by Watergate, resumed during Carter's presidency, and climaxed in Reagan's landslide. Yet, even then, Democrats retained control of the House and got back the Senate in 1986. Republicans did win Congress in 1994, but a Democrat was president and was reelected easily in 1996. Burnham characterized the '90s as a period of "unstable equilibrium" between the parties.

What made the 1896 and 1932 realignments hard was that they coincided with steep downturns in the business cycle. The political trends were present in prior elections—in 1928, for instance, Al Smith began to draw urban voters to the Democrats—but the depression of the 1890s and the Great Depression catalyzed and accelerated these trends. McKinley and the Republicans blamed the depression of the 1890s on Democrat Grover Cleveland. Franklin Roosevelt blamed the 1929 stock market crash and subsequent depression on Herbert Hoover. In both cases, the stigma remained for decades. Democrats were still running successfully against Herbert Hoover 20 years after he left office.

In 1980, Reagan and the Republicans were able to take advantage of deep divisions within the Democratic Party over civil rights (and later abortion), but, for catalysts, they had to rely on the Iranian hostage crisis and the stagflation of the late '70s, which led to a recession. By the 1992 election, the impressions created by these events had largely worn off. That prevented the Reagan Republicans from developing the kind of hard, enduring majority that the New Deal Democrats had enjoyed.

Will the Democratic realignment of 2008 be hard or soft? Initially, it seemed it would be soft. Like the Reagan realignment, it began in fits and starts—Clinton's victory in 1992 was comparable to Richard Nixon's victory in 1968, with Ross Perot playing the schismatic role that George Wallace had played in 1968. The Democratic trend was slowed by the Clinton scandals and interrupted by September 11. By this measure, 2008 seemed to be more analogous to 1980 than to 1932 or 1896.

But the onset of the financial crisis may have changed this. The coming economic downturn may more closely resemble the depression of the 1930s than the relatively shallow recessions of 1980 or 1991. There are, sad to say, striking resemblances between the circumstances that led to the Great Depression and those that led to the current emergency. In both cases, the downturn was preceded by overcapacity in an industry that had been key to growth—automobiles in the 1920s, telecommunications and computers in the 1990s. In both cases, there were mild recessions—1927 and 2002, respectively—that preceded the final downturn and were overcome by government policies. The Fed lowered interest rates in the 1920s and 2000s, and the Bush administration cut taxes. But, instead of fueling a genuine recovery, these policies fueled a speculative bonanza in the stock market of the late 1920s and in the housing market of the last years. That created a tower of toxic debt. When consumer demand and productive investment began to lag again, this tower collapsed. And, in both cases, the downturn, instead of being confined to the United States, was international, making recovery even more difficult.

There are differences, of course, between the two periods. For one thing, international cooperation to prevent a recession from becoming a global depression is much more likely this time around. Still, there is a likelihood that this recession will deepen over the next year and at least raise the specter of a new depression—something that never occurred in 1980 or in 1991.

If Obama and congressional Democrats act boldly, they can not only arrest the downturn but also lay the basis for an enduring majority. As was the case with Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, many of the measures necessary to combat today's recession will also help ensure long-term Democratic electoral success. Many Southerners remained Democrats for generations in part because of Roosevelt's rural electrification program; a similar program for bringing broadband to the hinterland could lure these voters back to the Democratic Party. And national health insurance could play the same role in Democrats' future prospects that Social Security played in the perpetuation of the New Deal majority.

Americans, to be sure, are always reluctant to undertake ambitious government initiatives. This is a country, historian Louis Hartz once pointed out, founded on Lockean liberalism. But, as Roosevelt discovered when he was elected, a national crisis creates popular willingness to entertain dramatic initiatives. Moreover, Obama will not face the same formidable adversaries that Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton had to confront. The Republican Party will be divided and demoralized after this defeat. And, just as the Great Depression took Prohibition and the other great social issues of the 1920s off the popular agenda, this downturn has pushed aside the culture war of the last decades. It simply wasn't a factor in the presidential election.

If, however, Obama and the Democrats take the advice of official Washington and go slow—adopting incremental reforms, appeasing adversaries that have lost their clout—they could end up prolonging the downturn and discrediting themselves. What might have been a hard realignment could become not merely a soft realignment, but perhaps even an abortive one. That's not the kind of change America needs—or wants. ◆

ANTHONY RUSSO

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Obama's Choice

The next Larry Summers or . . . Larry Summers.

NOAM SCHEIBER

In early 2003, Bill McDonough, the longtime president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, announced he was stepping down after ten years at the helm. The New York Fed presidency is one of the most powerful positions in government, rating behind only the Treasury secretary and Fed chairman in influence over the economy. This made the departure of the widely respected McDonough, who had led a rescue of the financial markets in 1998, a mournful event in itself. But, when the two leading candidates to replace him abruptly withdrew, the anxiety in some quarters became palpable.

It was then that Robert Rubin, the onetime Clinton Treasury secretary, put forth a former colleague named Tim Geithner. Geithner had obvious assets. He'd spent the 1990s in a series of high-ranking Treasury jobs, where he worked alongside Rubin and his successor, Larry Summers, to stave off one financial crisis after another. Geithner also enjoyed a warm rapport with Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan, who could effectively veto the appointment.

Still, there were question marks. Officially, the New York Fed is one of the country's top bank regulators; unofficially, it's the Federal Reserve system's "eyes and ears" on Wall Street. Geithner had neither a banking nor a Wall Street background. There was also the matter of his youthfulness. New York Fed presidents have traditionally been a grizzled, dyspeptic sort. At 43, Geithner was svelte and baby-faced, with teen-idol locks and a boyish voice to match. Who would take this man-child seriously?

It was the latter question that weighed on Pete Peterson, the private-equity magnate and then chairman of the bank's board. "He looks young, he's quiet, soft-spoken, a bit—diffident," Peterson recently told me. "I wanted to be sure the soft-spokenness, the diffidence, didn't translate into a lack of courage." What eventually put Peterson at ease was a conversation he had with Summers. "I told Larry what my concerns were, and Larry burst out laughing. He said, 'Don't worry about that, Pete. He's the only person who ever worked with me who'd walk into my office and say to me, 'Larry, on this one, you're full of [it].'"

Indeed, if not for Geithner's periodic assertiveness, the '90s might have looked very different. At Treasury, Geithner often cast the deciding vote between Rubin and Summers, who was Rubin's deputy through much of the Clinton era. Summers was a restless type, prone to intervening aggressively if there was a chance it could succeed. Rubin, on the other hand, deferred decisions as long as possible and erred on the side of caution even then. As Summers once explained to *The New York Times*, Rubin believed "that there is something worse than Country X going down, which is Country X going down and taking our credibility and $10 billion of our money with it."

In this mix, Geithner often made action possible by setting Rubin's tortured soul at ease. When, for example, the collapse of the Korean financial system in 1997 triggered a global crisis, Summers recommended an overwhelming response—a U.S.-sponsored bailout on top of an accelerated IMF package worth tens of billions. But the idea gave Rubin agita. It was Geithner who, according to one colleague, nudged Treasury toward a successful middle ground. Summers himself viewed Geithner as such a crucial counterweight that, the following year, he helped make Geithner Treasury's top international official.

In recent weeks, another financial crisis has ushered Geithner and Summers onto center stage. Geithner has helped guide the government's response from his perch at the New York Fed; many see him as the most pragmatic voice in a trio that includes Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke and Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson, two men skeptical of market interventions. "The idea that the Fed did as much as it did—with new facilities, new ideas—the breadth of it is stunning," says one former Fed official. For his part, Summers has become one of Barack Obama's most valued economic advisers, regularly weighing in on conference calls, even appearing at the senator's side.

Geithner might have been the leading candidate for Treasury secretary in any typical applicant pool. His even-keeled presence and conciliatory style—his Obama-like qualities, in other words—could prove a tonic for our financial angst. In this case, though, his long-time friend is a rival. In terms of sheer brainpower, Summers is off the charts. His activist instincts may also suit the moment, when dithering could prove catastrophic.

But, whether or not he gets promoted, Geithner will almost certainly see his influence rise under Obama. Thanks to his relationship with Summers and a sympathetic White House, Geithner would take the lead in reforming Wall Street even without the top job in Washington.

Tim Geithner was a rising star in the civil service when he met Larry Summers in 1993. Summers, a Harvard professor and former World Bank chief economist, had just taken over Treasury's international arm. He effectively inherited Geithner from an outgoing Bush official, for whom Geithner had served as special assistant.

Geithner assumed his tour as Summers's special assistant would be temporary and began casting about for a new post. He found one within a few months—deputy in the office of international monetary policy, a plum assignment for someone barely into his thirties—and the promotion was announced internally. But Geithner never took the job. Colleagues later learned that Summers had asked him to stay on as his consigliere.

Summers's brilliance made him simultaneously exhilarating and exhausting to work for—a whirlwind of intellectual energy fueled by an endless supply of Diet Coke. "I remember once giving him a memo that was three pages long," recalls Steve Radelet, a onetime Harvard economist who worked for both Summers and Geithner. "I'd worked on it for days and days. He read it in a minute and a half. He looked at me, saying, 'I don't agree with your argument. But, if I were making your argument, I could have made it better. Here's how.'"

In Geithner, Summers recognized the perfect complement. Geithner was razor-sharp, but had an easy way about him. He was a talented softball player who seemed to glide around the diamond, and his workplace demeanor was similarly effortless. This was particularly handy in navigating the political

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aspects of the job—not always Summers's strong suit.

After about a year, Geithner landed in the position of deputy assistant secretary (DAS)—which, among other things, meant he was overseeing the same office he'd only recently applied to work in, along with a few more like it. (Around this time, he also registered as an independent, having been a moderate Republican.) The new role made Geithner Treasury's first-responder to foreign-currency emergencies, like the kind that plagued East Asia throughout the decade.

Geithner was not just highly competent, but exquisitely attuned to the sensitivities of being a thirtysomething in a job many bureaucrats spend their entire careers aspiring to. At meetings with subordinates, he'd rarely sit at the head of the table. In fact, he'd rarely sit at all, preferring to pace around the room prompting people for input. When he briefed a higher-up, Geithner's habit was to bring along the bureaucrat who'd worked with him on the issue.

One of Geithner's fellow DASs was a man named Bill Barreda, who'd hired him at Treasury in the late '80s. At the time Geithner was promoted to DAS, everyone from that level up received a parking space in a small area between the White House and Treasury building. Except that, one day, an uppity assistant secretary bought a car so big it seemed to require new lines. The odd man out once all the paint had dried was Barreda, who found himself exiled to a less convenient lot. It was a trivial thing—surely invisible to anyone unaffected—and Barreda was prepared to suffer quietly. But, a few days later, Geithner stopped by his office: "Tim ... comes to me and says he feels really badly about this. Please take his parking place, he'll take mine outside by the White House." Barreda was floored.

As Geithner and Summers rose within Treasury, Summers increasingly involved him in the most sensitive issues to cross his desk. When proposed aid packages came back from the IMF, Summers's chief of staff often found herself chasing down Geithner because, according to one colleague, "Larry wanted to know what Tim thought about it" before he'd sign off. When currency crisis deliberations degenerated into esoteric grad-school seminars, someone would invariably turn and ask, "Well, what do you think, young Mr. Geithner?" In effect, Geithner had become a check on the bandwagon-jumping Summers's intellect could inspire—and which Summers, to his credit, reflexively resisted. "When you're talking to the Treasury secretary or the under secretary, there's a strong tendency for everybody to leap on what that person is saying and agree," says one co-worker. "Tim's fundamental function was to interrupt that process."

Geithner accomplished this with his usual light touch. "He would do this thing: 'I'm not that good at math, I don't know anything about this but ...' and whack you with these awesome questions that made clear he understood the issue better than anyone in the room," says another former colleague. Within the building, Geithner became legendary for his self-deprecating humor. Shortly after taking over at Treasury in 1995, Rubin convened a meeting with his senior officials and asked them to introduce themselves, prompting an arms race of resume embellishment. Finally, it was Geithner's turn. "Well, I've mostly been in high school," he cracked. Everyone doubled over in laughter.

Geithner could be every bit as diplomatic in, well, diplomacy. Jeff Lang, a former deputy trade representative, recalls traveling with Geithner to Thailand in 1997. The two had come to pry open the Thai banking sector to foreign competition. But they had the misfortune of arriving days after the United States balked at a bailout for the country's cratering financial sector. The Thai finance minister, says Lang, "knew a lot about politics, but nothing about banking." He proceeded to harangue them about America's abandonment of its allies. When he was finished, Geithner calmly explained that he understood, but that bank liberalization could actually help Thailand attract new capital. "The country was about to blow up, but Tim was

Tim Geithner ponders how he will remake Wall Street.

BAZ RATNER/REUTERS/LANDOV

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just terrific," Lang says. The Thais eventually came around.

In 1999, Summers took over as Treasury secretary while Geithner ascended to under secretary. By this point, the two men had perfected a kind of global good cop/bad cop routine. Summers was the bad cop—the outspoken sheriff with strong views about how to structure the international financial system. Geithner was his antidote—a master of process and protocol and Treasury's ambassador to global forums like the G-7. At one point, after a series of rapid-fire bailouts by the IMF, the Europeans began agitating for checks on the organization's ability to dispense money, something Summers strongly opposed. In response, Geithner hinted that the United States might start relying on other institutions—like the newly formed G-20 group of industrialized and emerging economies—to respond to financial crises. The Europeans were highly sensitive about the status of the IMF, where they had outsized influence. They quickly backed down.

Geithner generally gets high marks for his stewardship of the Fed over the last five years, particularly his longstanding calls for reforms that, in his words, would strengthen the system's "shock absorbers" and make it less prone to crises in the first place. Among other things, he has repeatedly urged greater transparency in the use of complicated financial instruments, like derivatives (essentially bets on the price movements of assets like stocks and bonds). And he has called for scrutiny of the way Wall Street creates and sells asset-based securities, which have generated huge losses in recent months.

Geithner also won solid reviews for his handling of the Bear Stearns meltdown in March, when he greased JP Morgan's purchase of the failed investment bank by insuring it against up to $29 billion in losses on Bear's dowry of toxic assets. As the economist Brad DeLong has written, Geithner seemed to strike the right balance between preventing a crisis (by effectively saving Bear's bondholders and counterparties) and discouraging irresponsible risk-taking (JP Morgan's bargain-basement purchase-price saddled Bear's stockholders with huge losses). Though some complain that JP Morgan itself made out too well, few disagree with the deal's basic contours.

Still, for the purposes of his own future, if not the global economy's, the more relevant judgment may concern Geithner's role in the collapse of Lehman Brothers in September, a collapse that was arguably the proximate cause of the recent financial turmoil. In the aftermath, critics wondered why the feds would bail out Bear and not Lehman, which, owing to its greater size and complexity, was more likely to bring the financial markets down with it.

While the deliberations among Geithner, Paulson, and Bernanke remain opaque, there is a growing consensus on Wall Street and in Washington that Geithner would have been more reluctant to let Lehman go if left to his own devices. Perhaps more importantly from the perspective of Geithner's career, this is the view that holds sway in Obamaland. "I don't know anyone who doesn't think the Lehman decision was a terrible error," says one Obama confidant. "But there is some sense … that Geithner would have handled it differently. … That, in terms of understanding and pushing on the severity of the problem relatively early, Geithner was strong that way." This person relates a recent conversation between an associate and a Fed official, in which the latter complained, "Christ, Geithner wants to save everybody."

To the extent there's a black mark on Geithner's record, it may have to do with the banking system more broadly. As early as last fall, there were hints that U.S. banks were undercapitalized—which is to say, they didn't have enough money to absorb potential losses on all the loans in circulation. In April, the IMF released a report suggesting the shortfall could be in the hundreds of billions of dollars. Which raises the question: As one of the nation's top banking regulators, why wasn't Geithner more forceful in urging the banks to raise money—or, if that was impossible, in making the case for government support?

Geithner's defenders argue that estimates like the IMF's are overstated and that the problem arose fairly abruptly in recent months. Prior to September, grouses a former New York Fed official, "[i]f one went to the Congress with that information and said, 'We have to pass a law so you can provide governmental capital to banking institutions,' they would have been laughed out of town." Even those who believe the problem was evident earlier concede there was little Geithner could have done to browbeat banks, because the mandate of the New York Fed is to work closely with them.

As a practical matter, the biggest obstacle to Geithner landing at Treasury may be his old mentor Summers. In 2006, Summers stepped down as president of Harvard after a sometimes turbulent five-year run that culminated with charges of gender insensitivity. In the last two years, however, Summers has largely rehabilitated himself as a public intellectual, opining on some of the more vexing economic problems of the day. His monthly column in the *Financial Times* has won praise from centrists and liberals alike and has become a must-read during the financial crisis. Recent columns have advanced the case for ambitious federal stimulus and vigorous regulation of Wall Street.

Friends say Summers wants the job he held for the last year and a half of the Clinton administration. Obama aides—who rave that, along with Rubin and former Fed chairman Paul Volcker, Summers was indispensable to the campaign—say they, too, sense he'd like another crack at Treasury. And, in truth, it's hard to begrudge him that. Geithner himself would be the first to concede Summers's sterling credentials. "My guess is that Tim would like Larry to be secretary," a friend of both told me recently. "He's the type of guy that, if Obama calls and says, 'I want you to be secretary of Treasury,' it's not at all implausible he would say, 'Mr. President, you should pick Larry.'"

What Obama thinks of this is an open question. Several Obama insiders told me the senator has warm feelings toward both men. "Put it this way," says one. "They are both highly regarded. Very highly regarded. Very, very highly regarded." It's possible to see Obama's personal biases cutting either way. On the one hand, the president-elect has a well-known dislike of "drama," which could tilt the calculus toward Geithner. On the other hand, Obama has an equally strong preference for expertise, which could favor Summers.

Substantively, the differences may be slight. Summers, like Geithner, would likely have preferred more robust action in the case of Lehman Brothers and a more systematic approach to the financial crisis generally. Being less politic by nature, it's possible he would have piped up publicly had he been in Geithner's position, or bent Paulson and Bernanke to his will. But it's also possible that such pressure would have backfired. Markets don't generally respond well to conflict among policymakers. If Summers ends up with the Treasury job, it's more than a little reassuring that he'd still have Geithner at the New York Fed—telling him when he's full of it. ◆

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The Shadow President

How John Podesta invented the Obama administration.

MICHAEL CROWLEY

The bright young think tank staffers at the progressive Center for American Progress (CAP) admire their boss, John Podesta. Podesta, who is also co-managing Barack Obama's presidential transition team, possesses energy (he is a workaholic and marathon runner), colorful quirks (a UFO buff, he has pressed for more government disclosure about reported alien sightings), and an unabashed willingness to dance himself into a sweaty frenzy at a party filled with people half his age (59). But the staffers also fear his darker side. They fear … *Skippy*.

Skippy is the name—coined during Podesta's years as a top Clinton White House staffer—for Podesta's evil alter ego. Skippy is cutting, acerbic, impatient, and doesn't suffer fools gladly. Skippy will gladly tell you when you don't know what the hell you're talking about. And so, before arriving at a meeting to brief Podesta on some issue of importance, CAP staffers will nervously confer with one another. "I really want to avoid Skippy tomorrow," they might say, checking to make sure their presentations are solid enough to avoid provoking Podesta's anger.

If that sounds like a tough work environment, it's also just what Democrats need. For years, the party has specialized in chaotic and self-destructive internal feuding that was partly responsible for the rise of the Bush Republicans. The Iraq disaster and the thrill of the Obama campaign have created the temporary appearance of unity. But the question is whether that will last once Democrats begin governing.

If CAP is any indication, chances are that discipline will prevail. And no one has been more influential in creating that new ethos of single-minded purpose than John Podesta and his whip-wielding pal, Skippy. In the past five years, Podesta has turned his think tank into a combination of highly efficient liberal war room and Democratic administration-in-waiting. That feat, along with his crucial role running the Obama transition, has made Podesta arguably the second-most important figure in his party. And, while Podesta announced this week that he won't leave CAP to join Obama's White House team, in many ways the Obama presidency will reflect his influence in the years ahead.

When the elevator doors open on CAP's tenth floor office at 1333 H Street in Northwest Washington, a couple of blocks from the White House, a visitor is greeted with a scene more befitting a slick Madison Avenue advertising firm than a liberal think tank. Hanging above a main reception desk is a pair of giant flat-screen televisions that alternate between cable news and looping video of CAP events on issues from global warming to the war in Afghanistan. The décor is sleek and modern—a far cry from dark wood and ugly upholstery, or the dreary good-enough-for-government aesthetic you might find at, say, the Brookings Institution. Instead, the walls and doors are made of clear glass, affording an immediate view, on one side, into office spaces for a team of communications aides and bloggers for the center's website. On the other side is a glass-enclosed event room with seating for several dozen that has hosted policy addresses by everyone from Joe Biden to Hollywood heartthrob Ryan Gosling, who recently promoted CAP-sponsored work on atrocities in Uganda. The walls throughout the center's offices, which house a staff of 100, are adorned with edgy modern art and photography.

This sleek, more-L.A.-than-D.C. aesthetic—possible thanks to an annual budget of $26 million—is a testament to CAP's place as the crown jewel of a revitalized Washington progressive infrastructure. When Podesta founded CAP five years ago, with funding from a handful of big liberal donors like George Soros and Peter Lewis, the D.C. Democratic establishment was a mess—disorganized and too distracted by the long-running feud between its liberal and moderate wings to focus efficiently on winning back power. After Republicans consolidated power in the 2002 midterm elections and marched the country toward war in Iraq, big party donors and operatives decided it was time to rise above the bickering and score-settling and just build a new apparatus. As Podesta told *The New York Times* in late 2003, "I'm trying to be ecumenical on the center-left thing. When you've got such a radical direction of the country on the right, that's where our fight should be, and not with each other." (Determined to run a quiet pre-transition, Podesta declined to speak on the record for this article.)

Podesta was a natural choice for Democrats looking to pull their party together. Throughout his 40 years in Democratic Party politics, Podesta, who is lean with an angular face, has maintained a cautiously low profile. "I'm into the cult of nonpersonality," he once told *The Washington Post*. Raised in a blue-collar Catholic household in Chicago, the grandson of Greek and Italian immigrants first cut his teeth in 1968 as a 19-year-old field organizer for Eugene McCarthy. After graduating from Georgetown law school, Podesta worked as a top aide to the Senate Judiciary Committee, then honed his killer instincts as Michael Dukakis's chief opposition researcher in 1988. In 1993, he began the first of two stints on Bill Clinton's White House staff; during the second one, first as deputy chief of staff and then chief of staff, he was Clinton's point man in managing the Monica Lewinsky scandal and congressional impeachment.

In the Clinton White House, Podesta perfected an ability to impose discipline on potentially meandering gatherings of contentious Democrats. Neera Tanden, a former CAP staffer and former Hillary Clinton policy adviser who has worked closely with Podesta for years, recalls a meeting with Democratic officials in which one began to monopolize the conversation. "I'm not going to let you hijack this meeting," Podesta barked. Afterward, a prominent Democratic governor who had been present expressed envy, telling Tanden: "I wish I could run meetings like John Podesta."

Even sharper than his managerial skills was his partisan instinct. Former Clinton White House lawyer Lanny Davis recalls a divide within the White House over its response to congressional Republican hearings on the 1996 Clinton campaign's fundraising practices. Clinton's top White House lawyers wanted to mount a substantive defense, but Podesta joined with Davis to insist that the hearings be treated as trashy political theater. That

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became the official White House line, one that the press largely adopted, effectively castrating the hearings.

During the Bush years, Podesta has maintained that sense of aggressive partisanship—but in the service of an agenda more liberal than Clinton's was during the '90s. Indeed, Podesta is the rare Democrat with a strong personal connection to the moderate Clinton wing of the party who also has clear sympathies with the Pelosi-style left wing.

To that end, Podesta stocked CAP with leading lights from across the Democratic ideological spectrum, from a centrist Clintonite like economics guru Gene Sperling to Daniel Weiss, a liberal environmentalist formerly of the Sierra Club, providing them with both gainful employment and a public platform as they waited out their party's years in exile.

In its vision for a Democratic agenda, Podesta has steered CAP past the center-left fight. Under Podesta, CAP succeeded in promoting a liberal agenda under a more serious establishment imprimatur than, say, *Daily Kos*—and making that agenda the mainstream party position. (The political climate made things easier, to be sure: The disastrous radicalism of the GOP, especially on foreign policy, in some ways vindicated and certainly empowered the party's liberal wing.) Take two of the most important issues of the 2008 presidential campaign. On Iraq, CAP first unveiled a "strategic redeployment" plan in September 2005—calling for a 16-month withdrawal of most U.S. troops, with a relocation of some to Afghanistan—back when many congressional Democrats, including Obama, were still cautioning against a hasty exit. Now CAP's position is essentially Obama's. On health care, CAP began pushing a universal health care plan well before the 2008 presidential race began—commissioning polls, staging local town hall events, and, most importantly, devising a substantive proposal that became the model for ones eventually released by Hillary Clinton, John Edwards, and Obama.

But Podesta may have pulled off the only trick tougher than uniting his party's fractious wings: maintaining CAP's influence in the wake of Hillary Clinton's unexpected primary defeat. Podesta is extremely close to Clinton, after all, and, upon its founding, CAP was widely perceived as a vehicle for a Clinton administration-in-waiting. But Podesta also told Clinton at the campaign's outset that his CAP responsibilities required CAP to be outwardly neutral, and, as Obama gathered steam in late 2007 and early 2008, he never discouraged the numerous staffers who became open Obama partisans. He also did not predictably take the Clinton side in other intra-party battles. Precious few Clintonites, for instance, had faith in Democratic National Committee Chairman Howard Dean's "50-state strategy," which called for spreading party resources into red states in hopes of widening the Democratic playing field. Dean and former Clinton White House strategist Rahm Emanuel had bitter fights over the plan during the 2006 midterm campaign. But Podesta not only defended Dean, he personally urged him to press on and ignore the naysayers.

Podesta's careful maneuvering (not to mention his strong ties with Obama's inner circle—including his former boss and current top Obama adviser Tom Daschle, plus former Clinton lawyer and current Obama foreign policy adviser Greg Craig) enabled him to stay on good terms with Obama partisans. "Not too many other [Hillary supporters] would fit that description," says former Hillary Clinton spokesman Howard Wolfson.

But, even if Team Obama had wanted to snub CAP, it is a testament to Podesta's mighty machine that there is really no other alternative. For one thing, Obama's own campaign drew heavily from CAP's staff and expertise. Brian Katulis, an expert on Iraq and national security, worked closely with Obama's foreign policy coordinator Denis McDonough, who himself was on leave from CAP to work with the campaign. After the primaries, the chief of CAP's policy team, Melody Barnes, left to work for Obama. And Obama friend and policy wonk Cassandra Butts, a CAP executive, advised him throughout the campaign.

As countless irrelevant think-tankers around town can tell you, policy isn't much use if it's not effectively promoted. Podesta's team has particularly excelled at turning substance into partisan advantage—thanks to an aggressive press team which books the center's experts on cable gab shows and a feisty crew of bloggers. To take just one example: In July, an analysis of McCain's health care plan by three CAP policy aides, James Kvaal, Peter Harbage, and Ben Furnas, suggested that the plan might lead to cuts in Medicare and Medicaid (Kvaal is an occasional contributor to The New Republic). The publicity surrounding their report led a *Wall Street Journal* reporter to extract a foolishly candid concession from McCain's domestic policy adviser, Douglas Holtz-Eakin, that such a thing was possible. The Obama campaign quickly made the point into one of its most widely aired attack ads.

CAP's reputation for sharp discipline and ideological comity made Podesta the natural choice for Obama as he looked for someone to corral and vet the Democratic establishment in preparation for his presidency. Moreover, Podesta runs a tight ship—another key to smothering rancor is ensuring that people aren't freelancing in the newspapers via anonymous quotes. Hence the Obama transition has thus far been about as leak-free as one might hope for. Indeed, even some CAP staffers interested in administration jobs have found Podesta opaque about their prospects. (Meanwhile, every non-connected Democrat in town is scrambling to figure out a line to Podesta's desk. "People are getting freaked out," says one Washington lawyer hoping for a plum White House staff job.)

Although Podesta's own name often appears on lists of potential Obama White House aides, few at CAP expect him to leave the organization he has spent years cultivating. They hope CAP will carry on with him—even if it's sure to lose much of its top talent of the Obama team—most likely in a supportive role under an Obama presidency. But, while Podesta has succeeded in providing Washington's fractious crunchy liberals with an ethos of corporate discipline and efficiency, the question is whether that strict unity should define liberal Washington under an Obama administration. "One thing they're going to have to be very careful about here is, are you a think tank of the Obama administration or are you a progressive think tank?" says Lee Edwards, a fellow at the Heritage Foundation, upon which CAP was in part modeled. "Are you going to have the cojones to say, 'This is wrong, you shouldn't do that?' The temptation is always to go along."

Unity and discipline is certainly a must for those in opposition and trying to fight their way back into power, as Democrats were for most of this decade. But these qualities can also be dangerous in a ruling party. The Bush administration demonstrated what could happen when one party controls the White House and both chambers of Congress, brooking little dissent or ideological self-criticism. No one would wish for a repeat of the endless infighting and political reinventions of the Clinton administration. But the cult of discipline can also staunch the healthy tensions that produce intellectual rigor and new ideas. It remains to be seen whether Podesta, and the administration he is helping to shape, will acknowledge that. Maybe it's time for Skippy to take a vacation. ◆

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

FINDING OUT

Jeanne Moreau has reigned in French films since 1950, sensual, brainy, wryly dangerous, free. She was a woman whom men sometimes didn't dare to fantasize about, and for some women she figured as an agent of reprisal. All these qualities were heightened by her talent and technique. (Before she entered films, she was schooled in the theater, an ingénue at the Comédie Française.) But time has had its way with Jeanne Moreau, too, and now she appears as a grandmother. In fact, a Jewish grandmother.

The film, *One Day You'll Understand*, has a story by Jérôme Clément and Dan Franck, from a novel by Clément. Amos Gitai, the renowned Israeli director who spent ten years in France and then went home to Haifa, returned to France to make this film. The subject is the deepening awareness in latter-day French people of Jewish descent about what happened under the German occupation. This was also the subject of Claude Miller's *A Secret*, recently discussed here, but that film was mostly about the discovery of past facts. Gitai's film does some factual discovering, too, but essentially it is about darkness—not the facts of evil themselves so much as the shadows that some of us leave on discomfiting facts in order to get through our lives. Of course (hence this film) there is a counter-urge to know—the burrowing belief that one's life is askew unless unwelcome facts are brought to mind. The darkness is then explored.

Darkness, literally, is a key visual element in Gitai's film, as used through the camera of Caroline Champetier. In the very first sequence, a man, touched with shadow, moves through the Shoah Memorial in Paris. (On the soundtrack there is gentle music of Jewish flavor.) On the Wall of Names, in somewhat less shadow, the man finds the name he is looking for. Thus, sheerly with light and shadow, Gitai hints at his theme.

The man is Victor Bastien (intensely played by Hippolyte Girardot), who has been troubled about his origins for some time—ever since he saw the televised broadcasts of Klaus Barbie's trial in 1987 twenty years earlier. Most of the film continues back in that year, when Barbie's trial was on television. Victor, married and with two children, is aware of his mother's Jewish background but has hardly delved into it. He has clearly wanted the past to be past. But the Barbie business unsettles him. He has a sister, Tania, who was baptized Catholic and who is equally unsettled by the Barbie atmosphere. They look through family papers and discover a letter that their father wrote during the occupation to prove his Aryan descent. Disturbed, Victor goes to their mother, Rivka (Moreau), for more information.

Rivka, smartly dressed and heavily accessorized, is hardly an old yenta in a babushka. Apparently she has become the chic woman that she is, a collector of *objets d'art*, as a kind of triumph over the past. Rivka doesn't tell Victor as much as he wants to know about her parents, Jews who died in Auschwitz. So, with his children (in their late teens), Victor visits the village, the very hotel, where his grandparents hid during the war and where they were arrested by the Germans. The hotel keeper recalls the arrest, and Gitai incises it with a succinct flashback. We don't see the grandparents themselves. We see boots on gravel and police dogs, we hear shots.

In time, Rivka, whose health is failing, comes to reveal matters secreted under her sophistication. On Yom Kippur she is in a synagogue with her grandchildren. Out of her pocketbook she takes the yellow star that she once wore and slips it to her grandson. The oppressive badge of identity becomes sacred.

Near the end of the film, once again in the present day, Victor, now aware of where he comes from, now a more complete if more burdened man, visits a government office where compensation is being paid to the French Jews who were deported, or to their descendants. As the clerk ticks off the checklist of Victor's family's possessions, past lives are transmuted into records.

For his last shot Gitai views Paris at night, a slow pan from the Eiffel Tower over the light-flecked city. It furthers his theme of light persisting against darkness. Throughout the film he maintains this dark-light tension, often letting the camera glide through scenes rather than editing, to preserve this tension. So *One Day You'll Understand* is not exclusively a picture about the Holocaust. It is about a contradiction: human discomfort with some truths and human hunger for them. The instance here is acknowledgment of the fate of French Jews under the German occupation. The story, as film stories go, is simple: the implications are not.

Moreau's role is not large, but it is the linchpin, connecting shadow and light. She makes Rivka a woman whose idea of nobility is to enclose troublesome issues with elegance. As usual, she doesn't

ONE DAY YOU'LL UNDERSTAND
Kino International

DEAR ZACHARY: A LETTER TO A SON ABOUT HIS FATHER
Oscilloscope Pictures

ANTHONY RUSSO

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merely take the role, she possesses it. As usual, she brings to it not only her talent but her career. As usual, she makes her performance seem the reason why she has done everything else up to now.

Some years ago I spent an hour with Moreau in her trailer at a film location just outside Paris. (Her English is fluent; her mother was English.) Her day's work was finished, and she was relaxed. I asked her how the film was going, how she liked working with this director, Jean-Louis Richard. She said that it was going well enough and that she couldn't work well with a director unless she had slept with him. I congratulated Monsieur Richard. Moreau smiled and said that they had once been married and had a fifteen-year-old son together.

I turned to the subject of acting, asked questions, took notes. Her answers still resonate. Here are some of them.

"It is not possible to do theater and stage acting together. On stage one feels extroverted, selfish. In films one feels personal, private."

"Acting is more difficult for the screen because it deals with mysteries of self and feeling that must be revealed. Rehearsal in the theater is the reverse. It is like a hidden war—fighting against yourself. A good director in the theater is interested in what you hide. Hiding is less easy in films."

"Actors are very lazy. They think they are doing their best when it's easiest for them."

"I love *Jules and Jim*. I have not seen *La Notte*."

"Antonioni creates an atmosphere on the set. He doesn't direct in detail. He only wants to 'see what shows.' Godard, on the other hand, takes actors from A to B, and so on. He supplied the technique for [Jean-Paul] Belmondo who has only instincts."

"I would like to make films with Bergman and Fritz Lang. I almost did one with Bergman, but he decided he couldn't work outside Sweden. He wants me to learn Swedish."

She didn't. Nor did she work with Lang. (The film she was making at the moment was *Mata Hari*, which was not released in the United States.) *La Notte*, which she had never seen, is for many of us a masterwork, due in part to her performance.

A documentary called *Dear Zachary: A Letter to a Son About His Father* starts as one sort of picture and becomes another. The director Kurt Kuenne begins with a shot of a hand writing a letter: "Dear Zachary, Your father was…." Then Kuenne's voice-over—he also shot and edited—tells us that he set out to create as full a portrait of Zachary's father as possible. The father, a doctor named Andrew Bagby, died young, when Zachary was a baby. The idea of a documentary about a deceased man, composed of relatives' and friends' comments, places visited, parties attended, loves and likes, done as a gift for a son when he matures, seemed imaginative and apt. By the time Zachary was grown up, a lot of those people would be dispersed or gone, and in any case the wrench of parting, so pertinent to the film, would long since have subsided. Besides, the film would support a belief that very many lives, probably most of them, would be interesting if we could really know them.

But the film soon alters. This is not another "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" memorializing the obscure. Andrew Bagby was murdered, presumably by Dr. Shirley Turner, his girlfriend, with whom he had split and who, after his death, went on to bear his son. The gruesome story was splashed around the media. Kuenne's picture changes from a modern "Elegy" into an account of tabloidism, legal maneuvers, and family agonies.

Shirley, after Bagby's death, fled to Newfoundland, where she and Andrew had studied medicine. There she had

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her child, Zachary. She was jailed twice, as part of extradition proceedings, and was released twice without bail because of legal complications. During this time Shirley granted visitation rights for Zachary to Kate and David Bagby in Canada, the parents of the man she presumably killed. Kate and David, admirable both, are on screen more than anyone else, as they ought to be. They are the true protagonists of this tragedy made chillingly ludicrous by legalities.

Shirley Turner never did come to trial. (The whole story was blazoned in the press, so I'm not revealing a secret.) Just before she was to be returned to America, to be tried and almost certainly imprisoned, she leaped into the Atlantic with Zachary. Thus, all along Kuenne has been writing a letter to a dead boy. In fact, toward the end he says he could have titled his picture *Dear Kate and David*.

Foreknowledge of the facts, from the media coverage of the case or anywhere else, doesn't hurt the picture. Kuenne is a clever film-maker, tuned in to what is hip and hot in editing. Anyone who sees television commercials will recognize his overlapping shots, his divided utterances, even the flipping lips in still photographs (to emphasize the droning legalisms of some procedures). Kuenne keeps us watching not only because of his sleight-of-hand editing, but because he has chosen a lot of good interviewees and has deftly braided their comments and sound bites with footage of Andrew himself at parties, dances, even with patients at the hospital where he worked in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. Kuenne might have stopped when he, so to speak, retitled his picture: the last several minutes are repetitious. But *Dear Zachary* is a slick account of ancient crevices in the human psyche rendered in cutting-edge cinematic style. ◆

Sam Tanenhaus
THE IMPERIAL VICE PRESIDENCY

ANGLER:
THE CHENEY VICE PRESIDENCY
By Barton Gellman
(Penguin Press, 384 pp., $27.95)

As Americans prepare to choose a new president, it may seem a curious exercise to rehearse the manifest failures of the current one. But either Barack Obama or John McCain is going to be stuck with the burdensome legacy of the Bush years, and the rest of us will be too—possibly for a long time. The war in Iraq is still with us. So are Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan. The Wall Street cataclysm will ramify, locally and globally, for many months, perhaps years. An overwhelming majority of the public—an unprecedented 90 percent or more, according to some polls—thinks that the country is "on the wrong track."

But righting the country is something that no new president can plausibly hope to do. Too much lies outside the scope of the most powerful office in the world, all the promises and visions of the campaign notwithstanding. The truth is that even the most commanding modern presidents have often found themselves not actors but reactors, forced to respond and adapt to unexpected events over which they exert little or no control. Franklin D. Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan succeeded, in large part, because they reacted well—in Roosevelt's case, to the approaching crisis of world war; in Reagan's, to the impending demise of the Soviet Union. In contrast, Lyndon Johnson and George W. Bush were undone by their insistence on doing too much, getting bogged down in distant wars they had no clear plan how to win and at the same time foundering amid the sudden upsurge of domestic emergencies (racial strife, in Johnson's case; Hurricane Katrina and then the Wall Street implosion, in Bush's). Increasingly in the Bush years, the presidency has looked like an endless and often futile exercise in crisis management.

Yet none of this history has dislodged our national faith in presidential deliverance. After two years of campaign hucksterism, we still remain in thrall to the ideal of the "right man" who might transform failure into success, sorrow into gladness. The reasons for this are as much cultural as political. The presidency is the American institution that personifies our hopes and our beliefs—it lends itself structurally, and in hard times especially, to the illusion of a savior. The great irony is that our Constitution, and the form of government that it established, was founded on the wholly opposite principle. The Framers envisioned the head of state not as a demiurge but as an administrator—an executive, though not on the "business model." The very term "president" implies a custodial office, its purview limited to a single branch of government, in many ways weaker than the other two and rather easily checked by them. The members of the Supreme Court, with their guarantee of lifetime tenure, can limit and even overturn presidential initiatives. And the members of Congress are not only invested with the ability to make the nation's laws, but also answerable less to the president than to a narrow locality of constituents.

Even what appears to be the foundation of presidential authority—the nationwide vote that puts him in office—translates into distinctly little, especially given the rigors and the degradations of the long modern campaign, which during the primaries obliges the candidates to make promises and appeals that are routinely canceled in the general election. The result is that by the time the winner, or survivor, staggers to the finish line, he has no clear mandate. Bill Clinton discovered this in 1992. So did George W. Bush in 2004, when, having at least clinched a majority of the vote, he exulted in his newfound surplus of "political capital," only to see it evaporate when his two big initiatives—the privatization of Social Security and immigration reform—were repudiated by the public. The "imperial presidency" is in significant ways a myth, and often just an expression of partisanship: no party ever complained that its own president was imperial.

And there is still another impediment to the flexing of executive muscle: the executive branch itself. This intricate web of departments and agencies, massively staffed, is technically controlled by the president, but often seems to control him, whether through Cabinet brawls of clashing egos or interagency turf wars—a specialty in the Bush years, particularly during the first-term prelude to Iraq, when ideological differences pitted Donald Rumsfeld and his hawks at Defense against Colin Powell's diplomats at State, with Condoleezza Rice, in her small redoubt at the National Security Council, squeezed out altogether. It says much about this presidency that in some of the most revealing accounts of the Bush years—I am thinking especially of the books by Jack Goldsmith, Eric Lichtblau, and Jane Mayer, though

Sam Tanenhaus, editor of The New York Times Book Review and The Week in Review, is writing a biography of William F. Buckley Jr.

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not by Bob Woodward—Bush himself scarcely figures at all. He has been, for much of his presidency, less the "decider" than the remote presider, uninvolved in and at times even unaware of the skirmishes being waged in the recesses of his administration, in the Office of Legal Counsel, the Pentagon's Working Group on Detainee Interrogations, and the U.S. Navy's Judge Advocate General's Corps. And for most of the past year he seems to have abdicated altogether, leaving it to generals and Cabinet officers to dictate national policy on the most vital questions of security and the economy.

Many of the conflicts that beset Bush's administration have occurred at an "operational" level, at which the president is not expected to meddle, and normally does not do so. This would not be a problem except that Bush's presidency, like Nixon's and Reagan's—the two it most resembles—adopted the insurgency model, and so teetered almost continually on the brink of illegality, sometimes tipping over. Scandal has seldom plagued mainstream Republican administrations—Eisenhower, Ford, George H. W. Bush—that have developed policies meant to steer the nation toward conservative ends; but "movement" presidencies, premised on ideological opposition to government itself, often begin or end by declaring war on the "managerial elite" or "new class" of policy intellectuals who staff the executive branch's own agencies.

This is the mentality that time and again has led Republican presidencies into disaster, from Watergate through Iran-Contra and the multiple offenses of the two Bush terms. As it happens, Dick Cheney has borne unique witness to all those calamitous events. And it is not surprising that he would have created something wholly new in American government: the imperial vice presidency.

In *Angler: The Cheney Vice Presidency*, Barton Gellman limits himself to the Bush years, an ample enough subject. Much of what Gellman reports we already know, since it was published to great acclaim in *The Washington Post*, where he works. The newspaper also published an excerpt from the book's climactic chapters, which relate how in 2004 several top-ranking Justice Department officials—including Attorney General John Ashcroft and Robert Mueller, the FBI director—nearly resigned in protest over the administration's "special surveillance program," the illegal electronic eavesdropping campaign hatched by Cheney and his lieutenant David Addington. Yet Gellman's narrative deserves to be read in full, in all its dismaying detail. It is a triumph of reporting on a figure who, in a public life that reaches back some forty years, has demonstrated unparalleled skills at remaining unknown and unknowable.

Gellman seems grateful that Cheney, though he declined to be interviewed, "allow[ed] his office to cooperate" at all: "There were many subjects and people held off-limits—I was on my own to find sources on national security, intelligence, legal issues, and Cheney's relationship with George Bush—but on domestic policy the vice president's office encouraged former staff members to grant interviews." Cheney was not always so reclusive. He once gave a candid interview to Nicholas Lemann, who wrote a prescient profile of Cheney at the outset of the Bush presidency. And in the prelude to the Iraq invasion, Cheney was the voice of the administration's case for war. He also cooperated with Stephen F. Hayes, a writer at *The Weekly Standard*, on a biography that includes useful detail but is an inside job, the Elks Club version, its subject smoothed of all ambiguity and cleansed of all culpability.

Gellman's book may well be the fullest account we will ever get of its subject. Cheney's papers have been sealed and will remain inaccessible for many years to come, provided that he does not have them shredded or burned, which is altogether possible. It seems equally unlikely that Cheney will write an apologia or a finger-pointing memoir—testament to his discipline, and also to his oddly touching quality of genuine self-negation. These attributes have made Cheney, seen so long as "the ultimate staffer," one of the most remarkable figures in modern political history and—in the Machiavellian sense—one of the most accomplished. He is an all-around master of the arts of power. His unique force as Bush's "deputy president" is hardly a secret, but still the mind reels at Gellman's summation: "Cheney reshaped national security law, expanded the prerogatives of the executive branch, midwifed the birth of domestic espionage, rewrote the president's tax bill, shifted the course of a river out west, shut down negotiations with North Korea, and had a major role in bringing war to Iraq."

Gellman explains how it happened, step by step, machination by machination, all of it unfolding with the logic of a

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one-man conspiracy. There was Cheney's initial vetting, as head of the vice presidential search team, of his rival contenders (he made everyone fill out disclosure forms so complete that each effectively spilled his darkest secrets, while he himself submitted no documentation to speak of); his careful pruning of Bush's own circle of pre-election friends from important White House posts; the system through which memos and e-mails on every pressing matter were routed via blind copies to the vice president's office. In debate he was matchless—as anyone remembers who watched him dismantle Joseph Lieberman in 2000 and John Edwards in 2004. Behind the scenes he was more impressive still. No decision was too large for his attention, no detail too small. "Vice presidents traditionally joined the president at 'policy time,' if the president so desired," Gellman writes. "Cheney intended to get involved sooner, long before the moment of decision. By 'reaching down,' a term that recurs often with his aides, Cheney set himself up to shift the course of events while deferring to Bush's prerogatives at the top. Cheney would exert a quiet dominance over meetings in which advisers framed their goals, narrowed options, and decided when—or whether—to bring them to the president. Cheney's presence unavoidably changed the tone, and often the outcome."

He sought neither credit nor reward, and had no prospect of becoming president himself. What, then, were his ambitions? This is not precisely clear. He certainly possessed a clear and deeply held view of America's dominant position in the world, and also of its vulnerabilities. Cheney also nursed a commitment to what Gellman calls a "presidentialist" politics, which demanded that the totality of significant policymaking be centered in the White House, with only a handful of reliable agencies occasionally drawn in. Unreliable agencies—that is to say, those deemed ideologically unsound, whether because tainted by liberalism or too accommodating to "the other side"—would be undermined or even destroyed. Cheney witnessed this approach in Nixon's first term when, under his mentor, Donald Rumsfeld, he helped to administer—that is, neutralize—the Office of Economic Opportunity. Nixon hated the agency. Rumsfeld did, too. This made Cheney the ideal man to run it out of business. It was a small-scale insurgency, a test case for more ambitious ones.

Cheney wisely turned down a job on Nixon's re-election campaign in 1972. Nixon won by the most decisive landslide in history, but within a year he was ruined by Watergate. When Gerald Ford succeeded Nixon, Cheney, at the age of thirty-four, became White House chief of staff, one of several caretakers of a damaged office trampled under by the "Watergate Congress" elected in 1974. That was why Ford convened his staff and urged them "not to lose heart," Hayes writes in *Cheney: The Untold Story of America's Most Powerful and Controversial Vice President.* Hayes adds: "The message, for a relatively conservative politician, was somewhat ironic. Ford told his staff that the political fortunes of the GOP—even then a party that sought to constrain government by noting its many failures—would be enhanced only by restoring confidence in the federal government."

But it was ironic only to those who believed that a discredited government was a good thing. Cheney, who had been working on a doctorate in political science at the University of Wisconsin, was not yet a full-fledged insurgent. As Lemann has observed:

> During Cheney's career, the Republican Party became more rhetorically opposed to the idea of government. Cheney, the civil servant's son, never espoused that notion—he did not make scornful references to "bureaucrats"—and his party's hostility to government, rather than marginalizing him, only made him more valuable. When Republicans win, no matter how negative their attitude toward the government, they still have to run it; Cheney, who has worked at the highest level in the White House, in Congress, and in federal agencies, and knows how to get just about anything in Washington done, is a valuable resource for a party whose talent pool is thin on people who have mastered Washington operations. "He loves—loves—government," [former Wyoming Senator] Alan Simpson says. "Policy. Administration. Big-time administrator. Big-time make-things-work guy."

Through it all Watergate remained central to the emerging doctrine of both the right and the left and indeed shaped their emerging views of presidential power. For conservatives, the lesson was political. Nixon, a popular president who had been winning a war begun by Democrats but now disowned by them, was ripe for punishment by the "elites" at *The Washington Post* and by congressional Democrats; and the "third-rate burglary" provided a convenient pretext. Liberals interpreted the event legally. Nixon, the most egregious of the imperial presidents—his excesses inspired Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.'s book on the subject—had criminally violated his oath of office and jeopardized the Constitution. The truth, perhaps, was an amalgam of the two. Watergate began with Nixon's authentic crimes, but its aftermath unfolded in an incontrovertibly political context. Alexander Bickel, in an influential analysis published in *Commentary* in

The Revolt

Picture a certain banker's house and its crawl space,
then imagine a circumstance in which he has to crawl.
If you want to take part, imagine rats' nests
and a leaking pipe, and all the plumbers in the world
tired of shit, not answering their phones. For I have
come to my banker's house, already having unscrewed
what down below was screwed tight. I've rung his bell,
and have been made to wait in the garden
and take off my shoes. Time used to be money.
Now it's an invisible hand slapping you in the face.
He has told me, in so many words, my kind
of industriousness is cancelled by his kind of dream.
He wrote a letter explaining this, the fall-out
from the windfall, the gobble and the gobbledegook,
and four or five reasons why all necessity is his.
If you want to take part, picture plush carpets
in his favorite room and sets of antlers mounted
next to portraits of his father and himself. Know
you are only a few decimal points from being me.
The waste in that pipe, his very own waste, well,
you might say I've liberated it, let it out.
My plan is to be sitting in his chair when he returns
from where he'll have found himself knee-deep.
If you want to be part of this, perhaps bring a friend.
I'll meet you in the garden where I wait without shoes.
Who knows what we'll do when his room is ours.

STEPHEN DUNN

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1974, acknowledged that conservatives fairly objected that the case had resulted in "accountability by crisis, accountability by trauma, accountability tending to shade into retribution." But he added that conservatives should also be alarmed at what the event signaled more broadly: "Watergate is evidence of a weakened capacity of our legal order to serve as a self-executing safeguard against this sort of abuse of power."

This failure of the "self-executing safeguard" re-surfaced under Reagan and then again under George W. Bush. And on both occasions, Cheney would be at the center of the controversies. In 1987, as a congressman on the joint House and Senate committee investigating the Iran-Contra scandal, Cheney helped direct the minority that drafted its own dissenting report. It extolled Oliver North ("the most effective and impressive witness this committee has heard") and supported Reagan's prerogative, as the formulator of the nation's foreign policy, to override congressional sanctions against assisting the Nicaraguan Contras. This was at odds with classic conservative doctrine, which had always sought to limit presidential power. But it was essential to "movement" orthodoxy, with its revanchist belief that liberal ideas were dangerous and must be contested on every front, even if it meant traducing legal distinctions so important to an elitist like Alexander Bickel.

In any case, ideological differences had ceased to be conflicts over ends and had become instead a struggle over means. In the age of divided government, Republican presidents, repeatedly stymied by congressional liberals, chose to govern through a kind of top-down subversion. This is the thinking that resulted in the evolving theory of the "unitary executive," which originated in the Reagan years as an argument against congressional interference with agencies in the executive branch but after September 11 was transformed into a doctrine of limitless presidential authority. Only the president could protect the nation from further terrorist attacks and so should be allowed, free of oversight, to devise the most efficient strategies. The infamous memos by John Yoo authorizing torture "declared in the most expansive terms that the commander in chief need take no account of restrictions set by the coequal legislative and judicial branches," Gellman writes.

Bush went along with it all—as he went along with so much of what Cheney urged in those first months. This is dismaying but understandable. In his essay in 1856 on Sir Robert Peel, Walter Bagehot identified the essential dynamic of the Bush-Cheney partnership after September 11. The untested political administrator, Bagehot wrote, is predisposed to take direction from his elders: "Especially he does so on matters of real concern to him, on those on which he knows he must act … he scarcely considers for himself; he acknowledges the apparent authority of dignified experience. He is, he remembers, but the junior partner in the firm; it does not occur to him to doubt that those were right who were occupied in its management years before him." Bush's experience was exceedingly slight when he took office. In foreign policy it was nonexistent. But Cheney had been, among other things, the secretary of defense during the first Gulf war, directing the war with Bush's father, giving orders to Colin Powell. In alliance with Rumsfeld, his friend of many years, he seemed the ideal adviser to a president facing a new menace from the Islamic world. It made sense that Bush, despite his place at the top of the ticket, should accept the role of "the junior partner in the firm," deferring in key matters to the seasoned and unflappable Cheney even as Cheney quietly urged extreme courses of action.

Of course he was wrong much of the time. He was convinced the anthrax scare that followed September 11 was the work of terrorists; he insisted on a connection between Al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein, when none could be established; he plunged into mountains of intelligence data without seeing clearly what was there and what was not. It was he who on the same day forced Paul O'Neill, Bush's first secretary of the Treasury, to resign, after O'Neill challenged Bush's second round of tax cuts, and forced out the economist Lawrence Lindsey, when Lindsey estimated that the Iraq war might cost as much as $200 billion. And it was Cheney who devised the pointless vendetta against Joseph Wilson and his wife Valerie Plame, one of the more sordid episodes of the Bush years, which resulted in Cheney's closest and most loyal adviser going to jail. "If [Scooter] Libby had told the truth, he would have led investigators directly to his boss," Gellman writes. "Cheney was his source on Plame, Cheney directed him to speak to reporters.… None of that constituted a crime, but Libby had every reason to fear its disclosure would be—as indeed it became—immensely harmful politically. Nor is it out of the question that Libby had evidence that would expose the vice president to a criminal charge."

ANTHONY RUSSO

All this happened in the second Bush term, when Cheney's influence over Bush began to wane, first as the war bogged down and then when the Democrats won control of Congress in 2006. This last humiliation prompted Bush, despite Cheney's objections, to fire Rumsfeld on the day after the election, for his disastrous mishandling of the Iraq war. (Many Republicans had pleaded for him to be dismissed sooner, when it might have saved a House seat or two.) Other Cheney allies were let go, too: Wolfowitz, Bolton, Feith. But throughout Cheney never wavered. "His indifference to public opinion, an important constraint on most office holders, verged on contempt," Gellman remarks. "He spoke most openly in disdain of the news media and self-appointed elites, but he had a way of saying 'polls' … that made the word sound dirty." He was "the nearest thing there was to an anti-politician in elected office." But anti-politicians are often bad politicians. As certitude was Cheney's greatest strength, so inflexibility was his greatest weakness.

I observed him myself last spring, when he came to New York to fête Pope Benedict and spoke the next morning at the Hyatt Hotel. The event was sponsored by the Manhattan Institute, the conservative think tank. There were two hundred or so people in the room, but only a handful of journalists, most of them from conservative publications. Cheney summarized the familiar "good news on all the crucial fronts" of "Iraq's young democracy." Sectarian violence was down, and Iraqis had gained control of half the country's eighteen provinces. In muted tones he matter-of-factly slandered Congress, accusing its members of seeking to legislate defeat in "the central war on terror." It was the old dogma of 2002, intact and unreconstructed, as if nothing had changed or was in need of revision. The great insurgent seemed curiously frozen in time. He also said that President Bush "will not look at the polls, listen to the pundits, or read the editorial pages." He was imposing, serious, and grave, but—as always—self-abnegating.

Cheney abused power, but he was free of the petty corruptions that have tainted so many other powerful men. "Cheney believed that the country was in mortal danger and that he knew better than

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anyone else how to avert it," Gellman concludes. It will be some years before we can judge how right he was. But on one all-important matter the outcome is clear. The theory of the "unitary executive" is now in tatters, some of the excesses of this administration having been repudiated in rulings by the conservative jurists whom Cheney helped put on the Supreme Court. Congress is once again ascendant. And the two contenders for the presidency are both longtime legislators; one has been a professor of law. Both are well aware that the forty-fourth president will inherit an office more diminished than at any time in modern memory—an institution made smaller as a consequence of Dick Cheney's ruthless attempts to make it much larger than it was ever intended to be. ◆

Steven Hahn
THE DISCOVERY OF PRIDE

NEGRO WITH A HAT: THE RISE AND FALL OF MARCUS GARVEY
By Colin Grant
(Oxford University Press, 530 pp., $27.95)

I.

In the pantheon of the past century's African American leaders, Marcus Garvey holds an exceedingly ambiguous place. Widely regarded, then and now, as a spellbinding orator, a tireless organizer, and an immensely charismatic figure whose ideas seemed to resonate powerfully with many thousands (perhaps many millions) of people of African descent in the United States and abroad, Garvey has also been derided as a political charlatan, a scam artist, a religious revivalist, and a racial purist who traded on the desperation and the gullibility of his followers. Some influential black political leaders and intellectuals came to see him as an egomaniacal buffoon who imagined himself as president of an African-republic-to-be and dressed himself and his legions in resplendent military attire, aping the styles of the white authorities he set out to topple. Garvey, as W. E. B. Du Bois derisively put it, was the "negro with a hat."

Historians and other scholars have shared the discomfort and the ambivalence about Garvey and his organization, the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Although they concede that the UNIA ranks as the largest movement of people of African descent in modern history, they have written remarkably little about it, choosing to focus instead—usually briefly and dismissively—on the man at the top. The last full-scale biography of Marcus Garvey, E. David Cronon's *Black Moses*, appeared over fifty years ago. Most of the serious scholarship has been produced by West Indians, many with roots in Jamaica, from which Garvey originally hailed.

Colin Grant is a native-born Jamaican now resident in London and a producer for the BBC. In *Negro With a Hat*, he has produced a searching, vivid, and (as the title suggests) complex account of Garvey's short but consequential life. Availing himself of much of the extant source material—especially the multivolume *Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers*, edited by Robert Hill, and Garvey's newspaper, the *Negro World*—together with interviews with leading scholars and present-day Garveyites, Grant takes us from Garvey's humble beginnings in Jamaica to his meteoric rise to prominence in the United States, and then to his equally rapid descent brought about by federal surveillance, incarceration, and deportation. Grant skillfully combines a sympathetic perspective on what Garvey managed to accomplish with a series of critical assessments of how Garvey contributed to his own demise.

What the book lacks, and woefully so, is a deeper sense of the historical context and the movement itself: of the UNIA's geography and bases of support, of the ways in which Garvey's ideas were disseminated and translated on the ground, of why so many people were electrified by Garvey's ideas and vision and would continue to be enlivened by Garvey even after he passed from the scene. Grant offers a persuasive account of the man he calls "one of the most radical and enigmatic figures in twentieth-century history"; but he is far less successful in explaining the dimensions and the legacies of Garvey's many endeavors.

Marcus Mosiah Garvey was born in rural Jamaica in 1887, the grandson of slaves. His father, Malchus, was a stone mason and something of a self-taught bibliophile (Grant calls him a "rum-shop scholar") who succeeded in purchasing land; his mother, Sara, the daughter of peasants, worked as a domestic servant when she was not cultivating crops on the family's parcel. By all accounts Malchus was a difficult and abusive husband and father, who drove Marcus close to his maternal uncle and abandoned Sara along with the rest of the family after suffering financial adversity. Although Marcus would later describe his father as "a man of brilliant intellect and dashing courage" who "took human chances in the course of life … and failed at the close of his career" (a life course eerily like his own), he would always carry the burdens and the lessons of their problematic relationship.

Garvey suffered other personal wounds growing up. Over the course of his childhood he developed a close friendship with the daughter of a neighboring white minister. They played together, Grant tells us, "with no regard for the difference of their races." But as a young teenager, Garvey experienced the racial epiphany that became an autobiographical staple for (usually) males of African descent. (Du Bois tells a similar story.) The white girl was suddenly sent away and told "never to write or try to get in touch with me, for I was a 'nigger.'" Garvey never before understood that he could be any such thing.

What Garvey did develop in his youth were useful craft skills, an interest in the wider world, and a penchant for self-discipline and self-improvement. In 1901 he apprenticed with a local printer and moved first to the nearby town of Port Maria and then to Kingston, where he became a manager for a printing company as well as the foreman of the Kingston Typographical Union, beginning an important association with the struggles of the Caribbean's working people. Garvey, Grant suggests, had come to hate the deep inequities of Jamaican society and to crave respectability. He began to take elocution lessons and entered several public speaking contests, while joining the anti-colonial National Club and publishing *Garvey's Watchman*, in which he editorialized on behalf of the poor.

Before long, Garvey left Jamaica for Costa Rica, where he found work as a timekeeper on one of the large plantations near Limon. He quickly became involved in an ongoing labor dispute, aligning with the contract laborers, many

Steven Hahn teaches history at the University of Pennsylvania. His new book, The Political Worlds of Slavery and Freedom, will be published by Harvard University Press next year.

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of whom were Jamaican migrants, and establishing a bilingual newspaper called *La Nación*. A thorn in the side of the local authorities, not to mention the United Fruit Company, Garvey invited retaliation. When it came, he had to close up shop and look for new fields of activity. He traveled to Honduras, Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela, and, when he arrived in Panama, started up yet another newspaper, *La Prensa*. This time bacterial aggravations of his asthma forced another retreat, back to Kingston; and then, like many intellectually ambitious West Indians of the era, to the epicenter of civilization as they knew it: London.

It was 1912. Garvey had already learned a great deal about race, class, power, and inequality through his experiences in Jamaica and the European colonies of Central and South America. Yet, as Grant shows, it was in London that his experiences and understandings began to cohere into a developing vision. Shortly after arriving that spring, Garvey went out to Hyde Park and made his first forays at extemporaneous public speaking. Even more important, he landed a job on the *African Times and Orient Review*, edited by the Egyptian-born Duse Mohamed Ali and a magnet for intellectuals of African descent, especially emergent pan-Africanists.

By the fall of 1913, Garvey had written an essay titled "The British West Indies in the Mirror of Civilisation," in which he averred that West Indians like him would unite a scattered race and establish an empire of their own. Along the way, he attended classes in law at Birkbeck College, learned of Ali's ambitious business plans for British West Africa, toured the capitals of Europe, and, perhaps most significantly, read Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery*. When he sailed back to Jamaica in 1914 (there was no more work for him on Ali's paper) and met some missionaries returning from Basutoland who shocked him with their descriptions of life there, the historical and political ideas that he had been accumulating seemed to fall into place. "Where is the black man's government?" he asked himself. "Where is his President, his country, his ambassador, and his army?" His brain, he later recalled, was aflame with a vision: "a new world of black men, not peons, serfs, dogs, and slaves, but a nation of sturdy men making their impress upon civilization and causing a new light to dawn upon the human race."

Once in Kingston, Garvey formed the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League, thereafter known as the UNIA. Although he claimed that pan-Africanists such as J. E. Casely Hayford and Edward Blyden had effectively scripted his path, the goals of the UNIA were at first fairly modest. It was to be mainly a benevolent and self-improvement society rather than a political club, built around a set of cultural activities (music appreciation, literature, debating). Reflecting Booker T. Washington's achievements, Garvey also planned to construct an "industrial farm" modeled on the Tuskegee Institute.

Garvey and the UNIA failed to attract much of a following in Jamaica, though one of the new adherents was a precocious seventeen-year-old named Amy Ashwood. She was taken with Garvey's ideas and words, and shared his passion for racial redemption. She immediately became involved in trying to advance the fortunes of the UNIA and formed a partnership of love and labor with Garvey. Despite her parents' objections, Amy Ashwood and Marcus Garvey were secretly engaged in 1915.

By that time Garvey had been in touch with Booker T. Washington, and had curried an invitation to visit Tuskegee to "see for yourself what we are striving to do for the coloured young men and women of

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the South." He was ecstatic. But before the arrangements could be worked out, Washington died, and Garvey was left to contemplate his next move. He decided to take a chance and head to the United States anyway, perhaps finding a welcome from Washington's successors. In March 1916, leaving Ashwood behind, he sailed for New York.

II.

The moment could not have been more propitious. Since the 1890s, African Americans had been finding their way from the rural and urban South into the teeming cities of the North and Midwest. But with the manpower mobilizations of World War I leaving northern industries desperate for workers, what had been a trickle turned into the flood that is now known as the Great Migration. Thousands of black southerners found their way to Chicago, Milwaukee, Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Philadelphia, dramatically expanding the small black populations that harked back to the first half of the nineteenth century. And they were joined, especially in the northeast and south Florida, by a rising tide of West Indians (mostly from the British possessions) who looked to escape the bleak economic circumstances of their home islands. Yet nowhere did these streams of migration meld more powerfully than in New York, and more specifically in Harlem, soon to be called the "Negro capital of the world."

Garvey started from scratch. He had no political contacts in New York and little money. What he did have was enormous energy and what Grant accurately calls "startling chutzpah." Garvey cobbled together enough cash to rent a meeting hall, print handbills, and distribute tickets for a speech that he planned to deliver on Jamaica. Then he barged into the offices of the NAACP and left an invitation for W. E. B. Du Bois, a board member and editor of *The Crisis*, to chair the proceedings. Du Bois was out of the office at the time and subsequently declined the invitation. It probably was better that way. On the evening of the event, only thirty-six Harlemites bothered to show up and Garvey, moments into his address, had a dizzy spell and fell off the stage.

Not the most auspicious of New York debuts. But Garvey remained upbeat and eager to regain his bearings. He began by traveling forty blocks north of Harlem to take in a sermon by the famed white evangelist Billy Sunday, whose voice and histrionics riveted the throngs in his Tabernacle Church. More important, he set out on what became a thirty-eight-state American tour, during which he visited black elders and church leaders, spoke to black audiences, and took the measure of race in America. Although we have few records of Garvey's doings on the trip (and Grant does an excellent job of reconstructing what there is to know), he appears to have spent a good bit of time in the South, doubtless with an eye toward Tuskegee, where he was lukewarmly received. What he did gain was a personal experience of Jim Crow and his own view of black struggles in the rural and urban areas. And when Garvey headed back north and stopped in Chicago, he met with Ida B. Wells, who told him about the barbarities of lynchings, unknown in Jamaica.

Returning to Harlem after what proved to be a journey of six months, Garvey abandoned his interest in a Jamaican Tuskegee and turned his energies and organization in a more ambitious and decidedly political direction. With the aid of the Caribbean radical Hubert Harrison and the venerable journalist and activist John E. Bruce, Garvey won a new hearing—and heard he surely was. There were no more dizzy spells or tumbles. His voice, "part evangelical, part formal King's English, and part lilting Caribbean speechifying," boomed with such "torrential eloquence" that he "swept the audience along with him." Even the skeptics were impressed. As A. Philip Randolph put it, Garvey could be heard "from 135th to 125th Street." More than sheer volume, though, Garvey's speeches seemed to touch a powerful chord among his listeners, whether they were new to the country or new to the North. "His words were compassionate," one of them recalled, "he spoke from his soul, and you had this feeling that you were there, that you [were] he, too, that you felt the same thing he was speaking of." For John E. Bruce, "it was as if the whole of Harlem was speaking with one voice."

Influenced perhaps by Harrison, Garvey (unlike Du Bois) opposed African American participation in the "white man's war" raging in Europe when there was fighting to be done for a "just cause" closer to home. The ferocious race riot in East St. Louis during the summer of 1917, which left scores of blacks dead, marked, according to Grant, "a turning point" in Garvey's life. From then on, "the improvement of Negro life in America would be his focus." But Garvey's horizon was far more international than this would suggest. Indeed, over the next few years he advanced an argument and a set of organizational projects that not only took sobering account of black prospects in the nadir of the Jim Crow era, but also presented a breathtaking vision of political struggle and redemption that was pan-African in its scope.

Grant is not at his best in explaining Garvey's ideas. This is unfortunate, because over the years there has been much misrepresentation. But he is a careful scholar and he provides us with much of the material necessary to construct a clearer and more satisfying picture. Garvey's name has been most closely associated with what is called the "back-to-Africa" movement, in which people of African descent are urged to return to their "homeland." Yet it is far more accurate to describe Garvey's as a black empowerment movement. The world, as he had come to see it in the tumultuous years surrounding World War I, was organized around races, nations, and empires. African peoples throughout the diaspora had fallen subject to the rule and the exploitation of whites, and they could not expect to be free until they had a nation of their own to offer them protection. They would continue to be lynched, mobbed, and ground down until their oppressors had to answer to power—to a black nation with the muscle to defend itself and to command the world's respect.

Like the Irish struggle of the time, with which he felt a strong affinity, Garvey's vision was chiefly nationalist and anticolonial. He called not for African repatriation but for a movement to oust the European colonizers and establish a foundation for self-governance. Recognizing that such an undertaking would require time, maybe even a century, he encouraged worldwide organization and preparedness. Thus, he imagined the UNIA as an embryonic form of the new African nation itself, as a government in exile. To that end—and embracing the traditions of fraternalism most nearly connected with the Masons—Garvey had the UNIA draw up a constitution and a "declaration of rights," create a uniformed African Legion and a Black Cross Nursing Corps, recognize organizational units by the military term "divisions," invest in factories, laundries, and restaurants, discuss the wisdom of a "civil service" to train a political class, look to ally with the government of Liberia, parade in large processions, sing an anthem and wave a national flag (red, black, and green), and name him provisional president.

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The popular response, as Grant acknowledges, was extraordinary. Within a few years of Garvey's arrival in Harlem, the UNIA published its own newspaper, the *Negro World*, and boasted more than one thousand divisions and, at the very least, thousands of members and supporters throughout the Atlantic world. Over two hundred of the divisions (Grant has little to say about this) were outside of the United States: in southern and western Africa, South America, Canada, and especially in the Caribbean basin, where much activity was to be found in Garvey's former stamping grounds of Jamaica, Trinidad, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Panama, as well as in Cuba.

Still, about three-quarters of the UNIA divisions (more than nine hundred of them) operated within the territorial limits of the United States; and although the very largest of them took hold in the urban centers of the Northeast and Midwest (New York, Chicago, Philadelphia), the majority of the divisions were in the former slave states of the South, and the great majority of these were in small towns, villages, and rural areas. Closer examination (mine, not Grant's) reveals that although West Indian immigrants figured prominently among UNIA supporters in New York City, Boston, and south Florida, everywhere else the UNIA attracted African Americans who were born and raised in the South and had either chosen to remain there for the time being or set out on the journey to the urban North. Everywhere (Grant does not have much to say about this) the rank-and-file of the UNIA appeared to be composed of black workers and their families who sought, or had attained, some measure of respectability: factory and railroad workers, longshoremen, shipyard workers, coal miners, porters, janitors, tradesmen, domestics, waiters, farm tenants, farm laborers, and a scattering of farm owners.

By the early 1920s, Garvey claimed, doubtless with exaggeration, between two and four million followers; but even Du Bois, who looked to more of a middle-class base for the NAACP, conceded that the UNIA's membership was likely in the hundreds of thousands. Why did so many African Americans flock to Marcus Garvey and the UNIA? Grant offers a confusing and rather superficial set of propositions. He seems to accept the idea, advanced for the most part by Garvey's critics, that "a large number, if not the majority, of UNIA adherents were said to be West Indian immigrants," but he offers no explanation for their adherence other than their common places of origin. At the same time he maintains, with implicit puzzlement, that the typical black American who came to hear Garvey (or follow him) would have known nothing of Africa and little more than "the dimensions of his farm, the perimeter of his town or the outer limits of the district, from which no generation before him had ever moved."

The truth is that Garvey and the UNIA attracted a mass following—and with astonishing speed—because they cultivated fertile terrain. As slaves and freedpeople, African Americans were an extremely mobile lot. They moved, involuntarily, in massive numbers during the first decades of the nineteenth century from the Upper South and southeastern seaboard to the Deep South states of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas. They also moved from owner to owner, by means of sale, in limited geographical areas and over great distances, sometimes in chains, on flat boats, floating down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. When the Civil War erupted, they headed from their plantations and farms to Union lines, and then as soldiers in the Union army marched hundreds of miles in the Confederate and occupied South.

After Emancipation, African American freedpeople gathered up family members who had been widely dispersed owing to enslavement, and some of them scoured the face of the South for lost parents, spouses, and children. Desperate for land and independence, and worn down by the ferocious efforts of white southerners to enforce their submission (many of their political leaders were assassinated or driven off), some looked to relocate in other parts of the United States or even in West Africa. By the end of Reconstruction, a great many of them in the Deep South had come to learn of Liberia and of the American Colonization Society as a possible vehicle of resettlement. When they found this avenue blocked, they might instead collect themselves in what were known as "black towns," or unincorporated settlements at arm's length from whites. Many had heard of Africa as a potential homeland, even if they did not regard it as their motherland, and most sought local empowerment and self-governance as the best protection for their communities and as the basis for their future development.

Which is to say, Garvey and the UNIA attracted a mass following because they provided a critique of American society that made popular sense; because they spoke a language that had familiar ideas and cadences; because they tapped into long-standing institutional forums and rituals (especially those associated with churches and fraternal societies); and because they offered means and ends that comported with the grassroots struggles—and more generally the social and political experiences—of most African Americans. Garvey also constructed a global context that enabled his followers to envision a new and expansive arena of numbers and powers, and new and expansive identities based on categories that had come to organize their lives, "race" chief among them. It was a historical moment of profound political and intellectual confluence.

III.

Even as the edifice of Garvey's movement was expanding by leaps and bounds in the early 1920s, cracks began to appear in its structure and its foundation. Some were the products of escalating conflicts between Garvey and a number of other black leaders, who had once been affiliated with the UNIA (such as Hubert Harrison) or had always looked at the man and his organization with suspicious, and perhaps jealous, eyes. (Du Bois was one of the latter.) Many were the products of increasing government harassment, principally by the Bureau of Investigation (later the FBI), which first took notice of Garvey when he spoke out against black participation in World War I and became more concerned as the UNIA grew in popularity. Still, as Grant shows with care and evenhandedness, Garvey's own limitations—his blunders, his inexperience, his arrogance—deepened the cracks and hastened his downfall.

The story of the Black Star Line encapsulates many of the contradictory impulses that enabled Garvey to tap popular fervor and then spiraled wildly out of control. Garvey's interest in creating a steamship company meshed well with his vision for a black nation in exile—or, as Grant puts it, for "a parallel world equal to that of the white man." "If we are to rise as a great people, to become a great nation," he declared, "we must start business enterprises of our own; we must build ships and start trading with ourselves between America, the West Indies, and Africa." Possibly, as Grant suggests, Garvey also believed that a Black Star Line would offer people of African descent the comfort and the luxury that the White Star Line had provided white passengers and investors. But we ought not to overlook the

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ways in which black-owned and black-operated steam ships could serve as symbols of power, pride, and destiny in a world of commerce and migration. After all, when the first of the Black Star vessels left New York and steamed into Norfolk, Havana, or Colon, thousands of blacks turned out to greet it.

Garvey planned to raise the money for the Black Star Line by soliciting small donations from his many followers and by selling them shares of stock. And UNIA supporters responded with enormous enthusiasm despite their very limited means, many proudly displaying their stock certificates. The problem was that Garvey proved to be a dreadful businessman (but not a thief, as some made him out to be). He was certain of his own wisdom; he hired those whose loyalty appeared most assured; and he was overbearing in his style of leadership. "He was like a novice driver," Grant remarks, "who had a destination in mind but had forgotten the road map, and rather than lose time by turning and going back for it, decided to drive on, through diversions, down blind alleys and even off the beaten track until arriving at the place he'd been heading for."

Within days of the Black Star Line's incorporation, its board splintered into hostile camps, and although there is no evidence that Garvey benefited financially from the project, talk of improprieties brought criticism from other black leaders and black newspapers, and also intensified scrutiny by the federal government. In 1922, despite very few complaints from his investors, Garvey was indicted for mail fraud in connection with stock sales for the Black Star Line.

Garvey's indictment seemed a sad reflection of the growing disarray in his life and the movement. His brief marriage to Amy Ashwood, who finally joined him in New York and tended him after a failed assassination attempt, ended in divorce in part owing to the attentions he paid to UNIA secretary Amy Jacques (whom he later married). More than ever, Garvey spoke the language of racial purity, of "race first," and worsened his antagonisms with those black leaders interested either in labor mobilizations or racial equality. His feud with Du Bois and the NAACP reached the boiling point, and Du Bois, depicting Garvey as an alien and a demagogue who exploited the colorline, cooperated in the federal prosecution of him.

Garvey also appeared increasingly intent on reaching some accommodation with the powers-that-be in the United States. In June 1922, most controversially, Garvey met in Atlanta with the acting imperial wizard of the Ku Klux Klan. The invitation had been extended by the KKK, which sympathized with the UNIA's new emphasis on race purity and its long-standing goal of establishing a black nation in Africa. For his part, Garvey believed that the Klan represented "the invisible government of America," which was set on maintaining white supremacy. In a sense, the meeting brought together leaders of two shadow governments who could discuss their common interests—a realpolitik of American racial politics—and Garvey claimed to have been pleased by what he heard. (Rumors circulated that the imperial wizard would buy stock in the Black Star Line.)

Garvey's view of the Klan as white America's "invisible government" was not as crazy as it might seem. Grant would have us believe that the Klan was a predominately southern organization at this point, but in fact it was an immense national institution with an enormous popular following (the Klan marched down the Main Streets of northern cities) and with members and fellow travelers in the highest reaches of state and national governments. Rather than vilified, the Klan was widely celebrated—witness the tremendous popularity of *Birth of a Nation*, even in the viewing room of the White House under Woodrow Wilson—as the savior of Anglo-Saxon America, as a pillar of a nation reborn on a foundation of white supremacy. Few black leaders outside the UNIA shared Garvey's optimism. His meeting with the Klan unleashed a torrent of criticism, if not outrage, that blasted through public forums and the black press. Some of the attacks reeked of personal vengeance, but many critics were aghast that he would consort with "Negro lynchers" or so publicly surrender black rights in the United States. A. Philip Randolph, who introduced Garvey to the street audiences of Harlem in 1917, now launched a "Marcus Garvey Must Go" campaign.

He would not have long to wait. Garvey went on trial for mail fraud in the spring of 1923 and, after a dispute with his lawyer, foolishly chose to represent himself in court. Although the evidence against him was thin and his co-defendants were acquitted, the jury found him guilty, and the judge, undoubtedly offended by an anti-Semitic comment that Garvey tossed at him when the verdict came in, sentenced him to five years in prison and a fine of $1,000. (The Jew-baiting crack was out of character: Garvey admired Jews and supported Zionism.) In early 1925, after losing his appeal, Garvey entered the Atlanta penitentiary that had once held the socialist Eugene V. Debs. Over the next two years, as Garvey sat in his cell and the UNIA sputtered under the direction of a weak new leader, more and more voices—even those of his erstwhile enemies—called for his release. In late 1927, President Coolidge granted Garvey a pardon on condition that he be deported. In December, after traveling to New Orleans, Garvey boarded the SS *Saramacca* and sailed for Jamaica.

Grant devotes relatively few pages to Garvey's life or UNIA activities after his deportation, and in most respects the story seems to be a dispiriting one. Garvey received a rousing popular reception on his return to Jamaica, but he did not plan to set up UNIA headquarters there. Central America or elsewhere in the Caribbean was preferable, but he was blocked by British and American authorities, and so he headed to London—only to return again to Jamaica in late 1928, where he entered politics, forming the People's Political Party, and established UNIA headquarters in Kingston. Although his future initially looked promising, his enemies in Jamaica were determined to limit his influence, and he soon lost access to the U.S. mail and thus to much of the UNIA's American base. In the early 1930s, he and Amy Jacques had two children, but they were running out of money. In 1935, Garvey left Jamaica for London, "a broken man, broken in spirit, broken in health, and broken in pocket," vowing that he would "never, never go back."

Jacques and the children joined Garvey two years later, though they found him distracted and often away on lecture and fundraising tours of Canada and the Caribbean. When one of the children became ill, Jacques took the opportunity to return with them to Jamaica, leaving Garvey behind in London, lonely and isolated. In June 1940, he died from the effects of a stroke and was buried there. Twenty-four years later his body was returned to Kingston and re-interred, after thousands paid their respects, in King George VI Memorial Park.

IV.

What of Marcus Garvey's movement? The brief picture that Grant gives is one of rapidly declining membership in the UNIA, internecine struggles in many of the divisions, and the emergence of self-proclaimed prophets and visionaries eager to assume Garvey's mantle, most of whom had little impact. For all intents and purposes,

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it seems, Garvey and his project evaporated until the mid-1960s, when the Black Power movement in the United States and new political leaders in Africa and the Caribbean rediscovered them.

There can be little doubt that Garvey's legal troubles and eventual deportation struck the UNIA a blow from which it never recovered. Yet although our knowledge of the world of Garveyism without Garvey remains limited, there is much more of a story than Grant lets on, and one that hints at a far more significant legacy than is generally recognized. The African continent itself felt the powerful effects of Garveyism—beginning in the 1920s, when the UNIA and the *Negro World* found a beachhead in South Africa, particularly among the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union but also among many in the fledgling African National Congress. Their influence then spread north, east, and west, first to Namibia, southern Rhodesia, and Mozambique, and then to Ghana, Nigeria, and Kenya, where Garvey's ideas fired two generations of activists, most notably Kwame Nkrumah and Jomo Kenyatta, who helped to defeat European colonialism and presided over the creation of new independent nations. Garvey's vision of "Africa for the Africans" became a rallying cry for anti-colonial movements throughout the continent and, ultimately, a version of postcolonial reality.

Garvey's legacy in the United States was less dramatic and politically consequential than it was in Africa, but still it was significant. UNIA divisions, especially outside New York City, always had a good deal of autonomy, and while there were substantial membership declines and serious organizational ruptures after Garvey's departure, the UNIA survived in a variety of forms. In some cases, powerful leaders kept large divisions afloat; in other cases, smaller divisions were consolidated. Either way, community ties were maintained or reinvigorated as the UNIA, during the difficult years of the Great Depression, set up youth groups, operated businesses, provided food and clothing to the needy, paid for burials, and helped fight battles over housing and employment. Where the UNIA disbanded entirely, former supporters often continued their community-based activities or gravitated to the NAACP, the Communist and Socialist parties, the Future Outlook League, the "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" campaigns, the CIO, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, or (especially in the urban Midwest) the Nation of Islam.

The many avenues that took African Americans from a powerful encounter with Marcus Garvey and the UNIA into later worlds of political activism suggest that strands of black thought and politics long regarded as distinct and antagonistic were far more interconnected and mutually reinforcing: integration and separatism, assimilationism and nationalism, NAACP and UNIA, civil rights and black power. The interconnections are to be seen in leaders such as E. D. Nixon, a Garveyite who later affiliated with the NAACP and helped to organize the Montgomery Bus boycott; Charlotta Bass, who published the widely read *California Eagle*, joined both the UNIA and NAACP, ran for Los Angeles City Council and then the United States Congress, and remained involved with struggles for fair housing, economic empowerment, voter registration, prisoners' rights, and South African apartheid through the 1960s; Bob Moses, the revered grassroots organizer for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in the early 1960s, whose grandfather was a fiery Garveyite Baptist preacher; and, most prominently, Malcolm X, who was the son of a Garveyite, embraced the Nation of Islam, and later insisted that "every time you see another nation on the African continent become independent you know that Marcus Garvey is alive."

Even today there are active UNIA divisions—in Philadelphia, Washington, Richmond, Atlanta, Chicago, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Detroit, Durham, and Baltimore, as well as in Montreal, Dakar, Port Harcourt (Nigeria), Bergvlie (South Africa), Montego Bay, and Kingston—and Marcus Garvey is commemorated in many black communities, especially among the generation of African Americans born in the waning years of Jim Crow. His ideas, translated for decades by black activists in a variety of nationalist discourses, remain relevant for thousands of blacks, young and old, particularly among the working poor. As we struggle to contemplate what a post-racial world might be like, what its points of cohesion and fissure may be, what its prospects and limitations are, we would do well to take seriously the power and the influence of Marcus Garvey's extravagant messages and visions. History has shown that they made a great difference. ◆

Paul Starr
WELCOME TO THE PARTY

ON THE SIDE OF THE ANGELS: AN APPRECIATION OF PARTIES AND PARTISANSHIP
By Nancy Rosenblum
(Princeton University Press, 576 pp., $29.95)

Partisanship is resurgent in America, and hardly anyone likes it. To say that American politics has become polarized along party lines is tantamount, for most people, to acknowledging that something has gone wrong with the country. And, indeed, the differences between Republicans and Democrats are less easily bridged than in the past: the two parties now stand for different worldviews, not just different policy positions.

The divergence between the parties is not just a phenomenon of election time. In Congress, liberal-to-moderate Republicans and conservative Democrats have nearly disappeared. The parties no longer overlap ideologically, and party votes (a majority of one party voting against a majority of the other) have increased. On television and radio, old barriers against the expression of partisanship have crumbled—on the Internet, there never were any—and party feeling has intensified among the politically engaged public that follows the news. According to public opinion surveys, the American people as a whole are no more divided on national issues than they were three or four decades ago, but they are now sorting themselves into the parties on a more ideological basis. As a result, the two parties are further apart, and the temperature of the body politic has risen.

All this has upset many people who long for a return to the days when the parties were less adversarial and more philosophically muddled. Yet that era had its problems, too. The parties did not get much respect then either, and partisanship got even less. The term "partisan" has generally been used in an accusatory way,

Paul Starr, a professor of sociology and public affairs at Princeton, is the author of Freedom's Power: The History and Promise of Liberalism (Basic Books).

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as if it were synonymous with narrow-minded, shortsighted, self-interested. Tapping into a long tradition of anti-party thought, high-minded editorialists and elder statesmen regularly tell us that it is a far better thing to be above party, to be bipartisan or nonpartisan, than to take the side of a party and fight for it. Anti-party sentiment is so much a part of the American political idiom that even the two parties' standard-bearers in 2008 affect to disdain partisanship, one casting himself as a crusty independent and the other as a cool post-partisan. But to anyone who thought that nominating John McCain and Barack Obama would mute partisan antagonisms, the campaign has surely been a disappointment.

At the root of the rise of partisanship is a change in what parties and party attachments in America signify. The standard observation used to be that the United States, unlike Europe, had no mass ideological parties. Both the Democrats and the Republicans were alliances of convenience that included both liberals and conservatives, and the more ideologically defined third parties, such as the Socialists, were too small to be of consequence. Activists tended to form protest groups to influence the major parties from the outside, while the parties themselves often seemed intellectually vapid at best, unprincipled and corrupt at worst. Learning whether someone was a Republican or Democrat did not necessarily tell you much about that person's beliefs. If you took political ideas seriously, it was hard to take party spirit seriously.

That is no longer so. As a result of the defection of white southerners from the Democrats and the conservative revolution within the GOP, the parties have become more coherent. The change is not exactly symmetrical—the Republicans have moved further right than the Democrats have moved left, according to analyses of congressional voting—but one party is now unmistakably conservative, the other predominantly liberal. Activists who formerly kept their distance from the parties are more inclined to work with one of them and to identify strongly with it. Learning whether people are Democrats or Republicans now says a lot about their thinking. And as the parties have moved apart ideologically, the stakes in choosing between them have become undeniable.

To favor a party today, in sum, is to recognize inescapable contemporary realities about how anything significant can be accomplished politically in America. And to be indifferent to party is to be indifferent to all the ends achievable only through politics. Still, a cloud of opprobrium lingers over partisanship. There is no grand intellectual tradition that presents parties and party spirit in a positive light. And though there has been a revival of democratic theory in recent years, that work has had little—if anything—good to say about parties.

It is to correct this blindness and this bias that Nancy Rosenblum has written her book, which is both a critical history of political thought about parties and a defense of the contribution to democracy of both parties and partisanship. Rosenblum is an unsentimental democrat. In her previous book, *Membership and Morals*, she rejected the tender view of voluntary associations as the font of virtue, community, and the good society. But on the grounds that associations prepare people for life in a democracy, she defended them in all their partiality, even to some extent when they are illiberal (for example, when a group such as the Jaycees discriminates against women).

On the Side of the Angels repairs an omission of that earlier book, which, as Rosenblum herself says, gave "short shrift" to political parties; but her impetus is still to uphold the democratic uses of partiality. Parties do not automatically spring up out of society's divisions; political issues do not simply take shape on their own. Parties define the lines of division, shape the issues, stage the battle, motivate public discussion—in short, they animate democracy, and partisanship is crucial to that achievement. Rosenblum does not focus on the recent rise in partisanship as American politics has become more polarized. But if ever there were a time to give parties and partisanship a realistic and more accepting look, it is now.

Concerns about the anti-party slant of democratic theory are not new. In 1942, in his book *Party Government*, the political scientist E. E. Schattschneider wrote that the hostility to parties was so pervasive that even "the champions of democratic government" treated them with contempt, while political philosophers tended to "ignore the subject altogether." It testifies to the depth of the anti-party current in political theory as well as in popular sentiment that Rosenblum finds the same pattern more than half a century later. But whereas parties still are, in Schattschneider's phrase, "the orphans of political philosophy," they have also become, as Rosenblum says, "the darlings of political science"; and it is partly by drawing on empirical research on democratic politics that she tries to show what democratic theory gets wrong.

The more one agrees with a book, the more one may be frustrated by its shortcomings. Although some sections are incisive and deftly written, *On the Side of the Angels* is a labor to read. Cutting it by a third would have strengthened the force of the argument. Rosenblum's prose is so undisciplined, so maddeningly repetitious, so given to wandering into tangential thickets, that it is easy to lose patience with her book. And then there is her exasperating habit of stringing one direct quotation after another, often without identifying the source in the text, forcing the reader to guess who said what or to shuffle back and forth between the text and the endnotes (of which there are typically more than two hundred per chapter, amounting altogether to more than one hundred pages).

These limitations are particularly conspicuous in the first third of the book, which at great length—and sometimes to no clear purpose—reviews political thought about faction and party up to the period in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries when parties were accepted and electoral party competition developed. Rosenblum identifies two "glorious traditions of anti-partyism." The first line of thought views parties as "unwholesome parts." Although "holism," as she calls it, comes in many varieties—hierarchical, communitarian, egalitarian—the common element is a concern for unity above all else and a rejection of pluralism of any kind. Hobbes and Rousseau are the two most influential holists. The second line of anti-party thought accepts pluralism in general but dreads parties as "fatally divisive" because they aggravate and inflame conflict. This perspective holds that some types of parties are especially dangerous because they cultivate a feverish factional spirit—partisanship—that threatens harmony. Madison, though he was himself the co-founder of a party, fits into this second category.

Amid the overwhelmingly hostile early view of parties, Rosenblum does find a few pro-party glimmers. She points to Burke's conception of "regulated rivalry" between parties within government as an alternative to violent conflict, to Hegel's notion of parties as organizations

ANTHONY RUSSO

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prepared to assume responsibility for governing, and to the "proto-Millian" view of parties as sources of productive disagreement ultimately leading to better decisions. (Rosenblum calls the latter "proto-Millian" because John Stuart Mill himself, though the greatest exponent of "trial by discussion," did not see parties as the agents to bring it about.)

The book at last gains focus and energy in its middle third, a little too cutely titled "Post-Party Depression," where Rosenblum turns to anti-party thinking after parties were fully established. Here she takes up the tradition of "progressive antipartyism," which serves as her primary foil. By "progressive," she means not just the reformers of the Progressive Era in the early decades of the twentieth century, but also their descendants—"the people of the uplift," as Thorstein Veblen called them.

Rosenblum sees the progressive animus against parties and partisanship as an unreasonable, overly individualistic, and naïve response to the vexations of democratic politics. "In its original and every subsequent incarnation," Rosenblum observes, "progressivism is moralistic. Its mantra is reform. In politics it is paired with 'good government' and 'clean elections.'" From the progressive standpoint, good government requires voters as well as officials to guide their decisions according to their individual conscience and the public good, whereas parties are corrupting because they appeal to profane interests and group loyalties. Accordingly, parties should have no role in determining the public's choices.

Toward that end, the progressives of the early twentieth century famously pioneered such measures as nonpartisan elections, primaries, and the creation of technical commissions and other bodies of experts to take over functions from elected officials. There is no contradiction, Rosenblum argues, between the progressives' emphasis on direct democracy and on professional expertise, "pushing democracy back on the people and then snatching it safely away to the expert. Both are antiparty. Both rest on the assumption that there is one, objectively discernible public interest that can be identified and promoted by disinterested public servants and an untainted, nonpartisan popular will."

Although Rosenblum's criticism of progressivism neglects its accomplishments—progressive reforms early in the twentieth century strengthened democratic government, and some similar measures would be constructive today—she is right about the anti-party impulse. Parties and party labels help to make politics intelligible. Stripping away those cues in nonpartisan elections and popular initiatives deprives voters of critical information, leaving them vulnerable to manipulation. Instead of more accurately reflecting the people's will, referenda have regularly been hijacked by well-financed special interests. Anti-party progressives are unrealistic about what informed and active citizenship requires in practice. As Rosenblum points out, parties create a "we," and this sense of identification and membership connects partisans to politics. In contrast, the independents idealized by progressives are typically less informed and less likely to vote. If you want citizens, you cannot exclude partisans.

Many people who call themselves progressives today—and who identify with the Democrats—would have no trouble with this critique of anti-partyism. But Rosenblum sees the same old anti-party progressive animus at work in two currents of thought that in recent decades have aimed at correcting democracy's ills.

The first of these looks to a revival of civil society but unjustifiably excludes political parties from the "charmed circle of the civil": "A moral hierarchy of modes of civic activism sets members of voluntary associations on top and partisans on the bottom." Such a view, Rosenblum suggests, misses certain crucial advantages of partisanship. Many associations are limited in their concerns to a single issue, and do not have to confront the difficulties of carrying out the policies they favor, and are not responsible to the electorate as a whole. In contrast, parties have to take a broader and more practical view of the interests at stake, because they need to win elections and, if they do win, they need to be able to govern.

A second line of thought seeks to repair democracy by strengthening public deliberation, but it unjustifiably views partisanship as contaminating public discussion. The ideal known as "deliberative democracy" calls for reasoning out through dialogue the differences among those with opposed positions. Its premise is that through hearing the other side as well as getting more information, citizens may discover areas of agreement and possibly better answers to their problems. For many advocates of the deliberative model, that means keeping partisanship out. The organizers of citizen juries and deliberative polls, for example, bring together groups of people to discuss particular issues, providing them with presumably neutral, expert information, while usually excluding partisans and party representatives.

Yet partisanship, Rosenblum says, is "desirable as well as unavoidable." Partisans provoke each other to take positions, and even when their provocations do not rise to the standard required for deliberation, they provide the "fuel" for more refined argument. Deliberation stripped of the emotions of politics and unconnected to participation isn't likely to have any urgency. "In the real world," Michael Walzer has remarked, in a passage quoted by Rosenblum, "the theory of deliberative democracy seems to devalue the only kind of politics that could ever establish a practical egalitarianism."

Marrying deliberative democracy to civil society, Rosenblum insists, will not solve the difficulties. To expect that deliberative debate will take place in civil society rather than in the partisan arena is delusory, because people tend to join groups of the like-minded. As Diana Mutz has shown in *Hearing the Other Side*, "those highest in voluntary association memberships are least likely to report cross-cutting political conversations." Democratic deliberation more often occurs in the rough contest between partisans than in the cozy circles of voluntary groups.

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Here, as throughout the first two-thirds of *On the Side of the Angels*, Rosenblum may seem to be giving indiscriminate approval to parties and partisanship, but in the last part of her book she draws some crucial normative distinctions. Elaborating an "ethic of partisanship," she sets out three principles, which she suggests more or less correspond to the patterns followed by the major electoral parties in mature democracies. The first of these principles is inclusiveness: it calls for parties to seek members across the various segments of a society. The second is comprehensiveness, which refers to the aspiration of parties to offer a narrative about a society as a whole, its history and direction. And the third is the disposition to compromise, which involves practical commitments to seeking majority support. These principles certainly are a start, but they are hardly exhaustive—and they do not indicate where partisanship should stop. And finally, in what may seem like a surprising turn at the end of her long discussion, Rosenblum examines the criteria for banning parties. She is not a free-speech absolutist. A democratic society has a right to defend itself against parties that, for example, refuse to lay down arms or threaten to eliminate essential liberties, such as the right to vote, if they win one election.

The most provocative part of *On the Side of the Angels* is not the discussion of parties as institutions; most people will readily grant that democracies require parties. What is more striking is Rosenblum's case for partisanship. The old progressive belief that independents are morally superior to partisans—more rational, more civic-minded, more self-reliant—still has its hold on contemporary political thought, but Rosenblum is right that the empirical data do not support that view. Instead, she argues, independents are basically free-riders on the parties, inattentive to civic affairs, voting at a low rate, and refusing to take any responsibility for the practical demands of politics. In an article in *Perspectives in Politics* in 2006, Russell Muirhead made much the same case: unlike independents, partisans do not just "stand for"; they also "stand with," and by standing with others, they are able to "stand against" their opponents effectively, instead of just making gestures. Or as Rosenblum writes, "If, as Ignazio Silone says, the crucial political judgment is 'the choice of comrades,' Independents do not make it. 'Atomism' is an overworked metaphor, but it applies to Independents: atoms of the unorganized public bouncing off the structures of a party system."

Contrary to progressive "antipartisanism," Rosenblum insists, "what is needed is not more independence but more and better partisanship." And this, I think, is how we ought to approach the current American political condition. The philosophers as well as the high-minded sermonizers ought to lose the vestigial anti-party and anti-partisan impulses. Polarization along party lines may be uncomfortable, but the parties now actually stand for something, and it makes more sense than ever to stand with one of them. The voters have a clearer and better basis for holding parties and party philosophies accountable. Partisan identity is now a more important aspect of Americans' personal identities, and we are going to have to live with it. We should not be averse to doing so.

And yet we must take care not to be too partisan about partisanship. It ought not to be welcome in every aspect of life—certainly not in arenas such as the schools, the churches, and the sciences, where concerns for other values ought to dominate, and under ordinary circumstances completely exclude, the partisan mentality. Yet in a society in which the parties stand for different worldviews that encompass education, religion, and science, maintaining those limits is increasingly difficult. Even in a partisan America, or perhaps especially there, the ethic of partisanship has to include rules for keeping partisanship in its place. ◆

Jenna Weissman Joselit
PASTE AND FUTURE

SCRAPBOOKS: AN AMERICAN HISTORY
By Jessica Helfand
(Yale University Press, 244 pp., $45)

Mark Twain had one. So did Anne Sexton, Lillian Hellman, Harry Wolfson of Harvard, and little Hattie Briggs of rural Michigan. I also had one, and I suspect that you did, too. I am referring to the scrapbook—that odd assemblage of memorabilia and mucilage that once ruled the roost when it came to recording the details of one's life and one's sentimental education. By the interwar years, rare was the American household without its own copy of *Our Baby's Biography*, *Alma Mater Days*, or *Him Book*, in which moony teenage girls compiled notes and stored away confidences on prospective beaux. Even the devout sang its praises. Following church and Sunday dinner, there was no better way for children to observe the Lord's Day than to create a "Sunday Scrap-Book," or so the *Ladies' Home Journal* advised in May 1891. "Select a picture and cut it carefully from the paper; paste it neatly into the scrap-book, somewhat above the centre of the page. Then, by aid of the Concordance, select a verse which the picture suggests, and write it neatly below the picture, adding the chapter and verse from which it is taken." This exercise, counseled the popular magazine, "cultivates the imagination, the hand gains skill. Great facility is obtained in finding Scripture references."

A domestic artifact made possible by the invention of chromolithography and the Brownie Camera, the scrapbook was both a book and an object, print medium and canvas. Within its pages, text combined with image and penmanship colluded with fabric and flowers, dog tags, ticket stubs, and the wrapper on an Oh, Johnnie! Milk Nut Roll to yield an amateur but truthful document of private historiography. The scrapbook exuded physicality, to say nothing of idiosyncrasy; it was a kind of cabinet of personal wonders. Though mass-produced versions abounded in rules and carefully demarcated boundaries ("paste here"), consumers gleefully defied these strictures. Whether pasting outside the lines, or layering a photograph atop a clipping, or substituting the details of a circumcision for those of a baptism on the page reserved for that Christian rite of passage, the owner—or more precisely, the author—of a scrapbook made it his or her own.

And yet, for all their willed fancifulness and fierce individuality, scrapbooks reflected more than the limited universes of their creators. They also engaged the wider world. It is tempting to read these decidedly quirky compilations as little more than the musings of a would-be siren from Sarasota or an aspiring line-

Jenna Weissman Joselit teaches American studies at Princeton. She is at work on a cultural history of the Ten Commandments in modern America.

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backer from Dubuque; to dismiss them out of hand as exercises in subjectivity, the exclusive purview of the psychologist. But this would be a big mistake. Scrapbooks, on closer reflection, turn out to be a veritable gold mine of historical material, a primary source of the highest order—the historian's bread and butter. Embedded in the culture of their day (how could it be otherwise?), they drew on and made manifest a common core of cultural assumptions and references, from notions about racial purity to a preoccupation with Hollywood celebrities and commemorations of war.

Consider, for instance, the 1941 edition of *Our Baby's First Seven Years*, which encouraged parents to take painstaking note of their baby's development, for the good of the nation as well as that of the family.

Anonymous scrapbook, June 1931

When carefully filled out, this compendium, its authors insisted, "will guide the teacher, the physical culturists, the eugenist, and the statesman, in their broad efforts to improve the race." Elsewhere within the realm of scrapbooking enthusiasts, Kitty Baker of Norfolk, Virginia, filled her scrapbook with images of Irene Castle and Charlie Chaplin, while Francis Johnson of Waterbury, Connecticut, filled his with published obituaries of his buddies killed in action. In doing so, they were not just listening to the hammering of their own hearts. They were also closely attuned to what America held dear. Taken together, this simultaneity of interests, this blurring of the line between the precincts of the self and the collective, this union of the quirky and the commonplace, gives the scrapbook its special charge.

No one knows this better, I suppose, than Jessica Helfand, who has produced a visually arresting and intellectually engaging salute to the delightful old genre. She has made her way through hundreds of scrapbooks and also through the extant scholarly literature, seeking to account for the widespread appeal of these things. Has their long-standing, transgenerational popularity to do with the human imperative to take stock? To memorialize the past? To freeze time? To celebrate the self? "To steel oneself against the inevitable tide of vulnerability," as Helfand puts it?

She is right that there is something primary and profound at work here. Noting that the scrapbook received a new lease on life in the wake of September 11, when sales soared, Helfand goes to great lengths to plumb the meaning of this exercise in visual autobiography. "There's something remarkably gratifying about simply pasting something in a book and calling it your own," she writes. "That basic act endures because it mirrors our own human frailties, our own endearing, perpetual, and timeless incompleteness." Scrapbooks, she ringingly declares, are "gestures of permanence."

Buoyed by these and other finely wrought insights, her book fully does them justice. Taking its cue (as well as its shape) from the traditional scrapbook, Helfand alerts us to, and sustains our interest in, the visual ingenuity, the ocular delights, of the genre. Thanks to her skillful reading of the ways in which photographs, newspaper clippings, and odds and ends were variously plastered onto the plane of the page or tilted this way and that, we come to understand that the fashioning of a scrapbook entailed far more than a pair of scissors and a roll of scotch tape at the ready. It was a "unique form of self-expression that celebrated visual sampling, culture mixing and the appropriation and redistribution of existing media," she observes, making this "visual vernacular" sound much like an adumbration of postmodernism. (But without a trace of theory, of course. The scrapbook is pure practice.) Elsewhere Helfand relates infectiously how words, detached from their context and "disenfranchised," took up the "language of collage," becoming a "visual component in its own right." Fuddy-duddy no more, the scrapbook emerges from its anthropological chrysalis as a modern American art form—and a pliant one, too.

Its stock-in-trade has always been "pretty pictures" and a "million private plagiarisms"—and yet the scrapbook repeatedly changed its stripes over time. Much like the culture from which it stemmed, this artifact was, and continues to be, anything but static. Charting these internal developments, which she seems to rue, Helfand chronicles the scrapbook's migration from a free-flowing enterprise to one controlled increasingly by rules, or what she calls "editorial shoves," from above; from an activity predicated on the use of found objects to those purchased at Target or your neighborhood outpost of Martha Stewart Crafts. Today's scrapbooks, she notes, holding her nose, trade polish for soul. As for digital scrapbooks, Helfand deplores them; she is even reluctant to classify them as bona fide instances of the form. With their reliance on Photoshop filters and a speed of production measured in nanoseconds rather than years, these newfangled narratives of the self, she insists, "drive a more significant wedge between human experience and the human hand, resulting in scrapbooks that quickly become formally neutral. Public, shared and community reinforcing though they may be, such projects exist in their own separate orbit."

Still, whatever form the scrapbook takes, digitized, commercialized, or homespun, the reader comes away from Helfand's splendid book with a heightened appreciation for this humble (but in its way ambitious) avatar of Americana. Though some of its detractors were apt to characterize the startling array of stuff that ended up within the scrapbook's dominion—swizzle sticks, ferns, hotel keys, ticket stubs, cigar bands—as "rejectimenta," Helfand prefers to see these things as "shards of a life." This strikes

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me as a more useful and evocative designation, one that generates interest and analysis instead of foreclosing it, or condemning the scrapbook to a world of kitsch.

But you don't have to take her word—or mine—for it. *Scrapbooks: An American History* actually reproduces a number of scrapbooks in full, so that we can see their studied artfulness with our own eyes. Here, in all its glory, is Christine Dobbs's version, which dates from 1913 to 1916. Dainty and feminine, it focuses on the creation of her wedding trousseau, featuring fabric swatches alongside photographs of the garments in question and detailed, handwritten descriptions. By contrast, Marybelle Harn's contribution of 1923–1927 is a bold riot of typography, each page chockablock with different fonts culled from the likes of Listerine, Ivory Soap, and Snow Flake Sanitary Powder Puff advertisements. More somber, and more masculine by far, is Francis Johnson's wartime scrapbook. As neat and tidy as a bed in a barracks, a testament to discipline and restraint, its only flash of color is a page filled with military decorations.

Keenly sensitive to the formal properties of these and other scrapbooks, Helfand is equally alive to their cultural properties: how they frame time, and give voice to sentimentality, and ritualize memory. In deft and supple prose that sometimes turns lyrical, she writes about the tension between the "fidelity to timekeeping," which lies at the heart of the scrapbook, and the "glimmers of uncertainty" that mark it. "There remains, in so many scrapbooks, the persistent hope that life will always be like this, full of fun and jokes and frolics . . . a blanket disregard for time's inevitable progression." Helfand is also right to maintain that the popularity of memory books is bound up with the "anticipation of memory as a core emotional need," and, with it, a "more conscious approach to timekeeping through events." During moments of war, the keeping of a scrapbook, she notes, even became something of a therapeutic activity: "Preformatted pages guided the user, and reframed the act of worry into a hopefully and arguably creative activity. It is likely, too, that the culture of rationing that pervaded American society during World War II led to a feeling of patriotic duty where scraps were concerned: rescuing and preserving them were considered prudent and wise."

These are fresh and vivid and even affecting observations, but often they read too much like quick bursts, snippets of critical acuity. It is almost as if Helfand has so fully internalized the workings of the scrapbook and its celebration of the intermittent and the episodic that its style has become hers as well. Much like her subject, she takes hold of an idea, shakes it just a bit, then quickly moves on to something else. This might be prized in a scrapbook, where, as Helfand writes in its defense, "to interpolate is to miss the point: rather, one is better advised to look for cues"—but interpolation is precisely what we want of her. Without it, Helfand's analysis remains as tantalizingly incomplete as the bits of fabric or wisps of flowers whose value she champions.

Still, this fine book makes a stirring case for the importance of material culture to the study of the past. Its elegant fusion of the material with the textual demonstrates with verve and intelligence how looking at history with one's eyes as well as with one's head can only enrich and expand our historical imagination. Not simply a mere ornament, a bit of dimity, to round out and enliven an interpretation, material culture is quite literally eye-opening—a revelation in fabric, metal, and plastic. It shows, not just tells, how our forebears actually went about constructing their lives, what they fancied and what they disdained, what lifted their spirits and what darkened their days. As Alice Morse Earle, an early champion of material-culture studies, put it in 1903, in her magisterial study *Two Centuries of Costume in America, 1620–1820*, old things contain the "lingering presence" of the past: its "harmless jealousies, gentle vanities, modest hopes." With an integrity all its own, the stuff of history hands us our past—if only we know where to look.

Consigned for much too long to the role of poor cousin, non-textual ways of apprehending the lives of our ancestors are only beginning to receive their due within the academy. On the considerable strength of Helfand's example, let us hope that full-fledged acceptance is just around the bend. In the course of things, Helfand quotes Daniel Boorstin's cautionary observation about how to go about writing history: if one teaches history as chronology, he remarked, the landmarks have a way of overshadowing the landscape. One loses sight of what actually happened on the ground and at the grass roots. Thanks to this redemptive account of the ways in which Americans of all sorts "committed memory to paper," the chances of that happening are now slimmer. ◆

Alexander Nemser
THE LONELY WORKMAN

DESCARTES' LONELINESS
By Allen Grossman
(New Directions, 70 pp., $16.95)

At the start of *Descartes' Loneliness*, the tenth collection of poetry by Allen Grossman, the speaker has posed a question to the world that we, the readers, have arrived too late to hear. The book begins, in the title poem, with the world's response:

> Toward evening, the natural light
> becomes
> intelligent and answers, without demur:
> "Be assured! You are not alone…"

Perhaps the question expressed solitude, even the fundamental solitude of the uncertain and inconsolable human mind. The poet may have been posing the question all day, waiting until the evening for an answer; or he may have been asking it his whole life. Regardless, the reader is made quickly aware of two central elements of the poetry of Allen Grossman: first, the sense that one has arrived late and is therefore essentially bewildered; and second, the idea that the question, and by extension poetry itself, has accompanied the human mind from the moment it began thinking. These two features are related, in that there is no information, no knowledge that could completely clarify Grossman's poetic project, just as there is no complete explanation as to why the question is there in the first place.

Grossman shares with Wallace Stevens the sense that, for the poet standing out in the backyard, a combination of the evening light's slanting progress, the warbling of a bird obscured within the leaves of a tree, the whiteness of a window, and the darkness of a bough can provide terms sufficient for a radical contemplation encompassing perception, delight, horror of reality, and God's fiat of creation. Born in Minneapolis in

Alexander Nemser's poems have been published in The New York Times and The Atlantic.

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1932, Grossman has been writing and teaching poetry for fifty years, and has created a style in which the high and the low meet and kiss like the poet's older and younger self on the stairs in one of his poems. While his poetic tone conjures up a kind of Lucretius of the lunch counter, an inspired and hectoring edifier, his diction is an agitated synthesis tracking the modulations of a dozen translations of the Bible. ("This is the material Sabbath, / our reprieve … Our god, our God, the real McCoy—say it / in Dead, philosopher—is ADONAI.") The result is an elaborate structure of griefs and gags to "mount to paradise / By the stairway of surprise," as the angels say in Emerson's "Merlin." And much of the surprise comes from not knowing where or when the steps will fall. "We cross the frame into the poem," Grossman writes, "But the edge may be anywhere like the border of the sacred grove. Often we note only a slight shudder of difference."

How to Do Things With Tears, Grossman's collection of 2001, comes closest to opening the curtain on his wild, boisterous, bookish world-system. In the prefatory poem of that book, the poet sets out a map of landmarks and means, describing the pathway of his love through the narrative, a

> story about finding
> a hazardous pathway, mountain road,
> or river walk
> hand in hand,
> from the accident, thrownness,
> natality which was our
> wandering into the world alone
> (somewhere—
> ENIGMA, MN?)
> to a general state of affairs
> (significance) which has
> a kiss in it (holiness).

The book traverses a remembered landscape, populated with ghosts and ghostly buildings always locked, always taunting the speaker with music, surprise, and sorrow—to fields of Dionysian "illegal night-games," the crowds of friends and family members in the stands chanting, "Nothing is lost, nothing is lost."

All along the road, the poems are ramshackle monuments, makeshift turrets "against our vanishing," built to see the world and to record our presence in it, both telescope and time capsule. For Grossman, building is our ambition, our confirmation, our defense: "*Cold, cold are the winds from the unmade world*," goes a refrain. One poem describes an incomplete staircase in a scene of "brightening air":

> Consider this, dear, how much more
> beautiful
> the unfinished stair. Birdlike it takes
> wing
> at the crack of dawn and is long gone
> before the glory empties out and
> scatters in
> the brightening air.

Grossman's poetry is intensely personal and dauntingly opaque. If Emily Dickinson enjoined that the poet "tell all the Truth but tell it slant," Grossman has raised the plane almost vertical. The poems are a climb, and the initial jar of entering their constructed mysteries has held off a wider readership for Grossman's work. At the same time, more than any other contemporary poet, Grossman draws his energy from an attempt, explained most eloquently and cryptically in the interviews collected in *The Sighted Singer*, to link his work to the drive of prophetic expression. In this Grossman's poetry recalls the remark of Allen Ginsberg, his cousin in clairvoyance, that "what prophecy is is not that you know that the bomb will fall in 1942. It's that you know and feel something which somebody knows and feels in a hundred years." Combined with his tendency toward scriptural imagery, this quality lies behind the reader's impression that Grossman's poems feel somehow ancient, age-old, more excavated than composed.

> The very song of very song, at the end
> of the world, arises thread-like out of
> the nest of sleep in the summer of song.
> I see now things are not as I once
> thought.

The difficulty of Grossman's poems is itself generally consistent, such that once the reader gets the hang of the didactic system, its puzzles and choruses become familiar. In other words, traversing Grossman's poetic landscape of "ENIGMA, MN," you find yourself at a loss so many times that you realize you're getting to know the neighborhood.

Rooted hungrily in human memory, Grossman's work often feels like one extended vision of lost spirits in the Land of the Dead. The environs of life and shadow constantly blur into each other. Often it is as though, digging up a rock in the garden, the poet had unearthed the stairway straight down to the dark. In *Descartes' Loneliness*, the "famished dead" appear again and again: "To this bloody pit—my heart—they crowd … I tell them, / 'The rule is *one at a time*.' / But whenever *anybody* is let in / the rest utter heartbroken cries…." But when they appear, these ghosts speak, in typical Grossman fashion, in the low and tender language of life, as when the poet plays Aeneas to his father's Chrysler Anchises:

> Now here is Louis, my father. He comes
> to remind me how
> he once sold 500 new cars in one year.
> I say to him, "Louis, I wish I'd known."
> —"Would that have made a difference,
> Allen?"
> "I think it would have, Louis."

Grossman's project revolves around preservation in the face of our loss of the world, of memory, and even of consciousness. Against the threat of Horace's "long night of oblivion," the fate of the forgotten human, Grossman has said that "poetry is the right means: poetry is the historical enemy of human forgetfulness, the historical agent of the name of man against the obliterative powers of the world—of Nature, as Horace suggested, but now also of man himself."

> …When a man dies,
> or a woman dies,
> the whole world of which
> he is the only subject
> dies without residue
> (or the whole world of which
> she is the only subject
> dies without residue).
> "DID I EVER LIVE?"
> 'NEVER, NEVER…'

This is the mind's sorrowing reflection on the unique value of its own contents, careening toward extinction and preservable only in fragments. A continuous existence is possible only in poems, in made things. This emotion has driven the lyric impulse to protest and to retention, from Keats to *Blade Runner*. In the latter, the replicant Roy makes his final speech to his pursuer Deckard: "I've seen things you people wouldn't believe. Attack ships on fire off the shoulder of

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Orion. I watched C-beams glitter in the dark near the Tannhauser Gate. All those moments will be lost in time, like tears in rain." Here it is the android, the created thing, that echoes the creator's feeling toward tragedy. Grossman's poems address the reader with their own desperate desire to preserve their world. In this sense, the poet has always aspired to the state of one of his own poems—to the perpetual singing that is neither body nor spirit, "but such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make," as described by Yeats in "Sailing to Byzantium," a mechanical bird to be "set upon a golden bough to sing … Of what is past, or passing, or to come."

Grossman's "frightened poetry," as he calls it, has tracked the threat of oblivion from images of the Holocaust (news of which pervaded his youth) in his early poems through the impending catastrophe of nuclear war (fear of which pervaded his adolescence) and the terrible fate of everything that is being forgotten. Describing how he "heard / Virgil's pastoralist for the first time" while a parade for General MacArthur, "ordered home from Korea by President Truman / for threatening use of nuclear weapons," passed by outside, Grossman writes: "Only Arcadians by their art remember / the magnificent graves of the human heart."

Even a snowfall, with its "covering up of the ordinary marks, the sense of erasure of tracks, of the indications of direction in the world" reminds Grossman of the threat of void. In each case, through violence, carelessness, and forgetfulness, we lose each other, get ourselves lost, and make people disappear. For Grossman, we are like the phantom sailors in Edgar Allan Poe's "MS. In a Bottle," who "*will not see*" each other or the author, as they press on toward some hoary pole with their eyes fixed on the sextant or on the white distance which reveals and promises nothing.

This theme is developed in *Descartes' Loneliness* in the form of the skeptic's "fearful surmise," in Stanley Cavell's phrase—the ominous hint that the world may not exist at all. *Descartes' Loneliness* is in large part about the attempt to make the world certain for oneself, assembling scraps of evidence and notes to the self wherever possible, at the very moment that the world is slipping out of one's grasp. Grossman has always been a seeking poet, but his latest volume rings with questions: "But *where* are you? Missing. Oh! *When last seen*? / —Now, cold rain. After that, silent in darkness, snow: / *Where in the world is the scene of instruction*?"

Most urgently, the speaker seeks his muse (Arethusa is a nymph who turned into a fountain when pursued by a river god):

> Where are you, sister, word-giver—
> shining
> among what wander-roots, what wet
> shadows?
> Unvisitable source, kiss my mourning
> man.
> Arethusa, kiss my wordless animal
> on his mountain, stone-alone,
> standing around.
> Arethusa, where are you?

Here is the scene of the poet howling for the absent song. In Grossman's work, poetry, time, and light are all rivers, all fluid, and the liquid muse runs in the current of each. For the poet deprived of inspiration, the grass is always greener because it is watered by the muse.

And this returns us to the poet watching the evening light for an answer to his solitary query. Following the light's answer ("Be assured! You are not alone…"), the poet embarks on an extended series of philosophical propositions recognizable as the basic procedure of Descartes' methodological skepticism:

> But in fact, toward evening, I am not
> convinced there is any other except
> myself
> to whom existence necessarily pertains.

The thought process continues, and threatens to consume itself ceaselessly in a spiraling ratiocination—"Do I really have / sufficient assurance of the existence / of any other being at all?" The world is nearly gone; a murmur of apprehension pulses through the neurons; Doubt gloats.

In *Moby-Dick*, Melville describes an analogous situation in which the foundations of the mind find themselves, quite literally, at sea: scanning the horizon for the spouts of whales, a young man on the masthead may lose himself in thought contemplating the "inscrutable tides of God" and lulling his mind into a sleep: "But while this sleep, this dream is on ye, move your foot or hand an inch; slip your hold at all; and your identity comes back in horror. Over Descartian vortices you hover. And perhaps, at mid-day, in the fairest weather, with one half-throttled shriek you drop through that transparent air into the summer sea, no more to rise for ever. Heed it well, ye Pantheists!" The irony is that Melville is making reference to Descartes' theory of gravity, which held that, because there could be no purely empty space, the air was filled with matter ceaselessly circling in a vortex pattern. In other words, it is the vortex that pulls you down. But the image is also fitting for the experience of tumbling into the groundlessness brought on by skepticism, as the world is reduced to a seemingly endless fall through air and air, with only filaments of thought for handholds.

Yet Grossman's poem ends in an ascendance of surprise. Having followed the loops and the projections of the mind, as though it were about to retreat for good into its own doubtful system, the poem concludes with the inexplicable conviction in the existence of some other consciousness:

> For,
> After a most careful search, I have been
> unable to discover the ground of that
> conviction—unless it be imagined a
> lonely
> workman on a dizzy scaffold unfolds
> a sign at evening and puts his mark to it.

We are suddenly in a different realm of language, one in which argument and proof have been jettisoned without explanation. Grossman performs the sort of switch to metaphor and then to faith that has perpetually enraged philosophers, in our time notably J. L. Austin, author of a famous work of language philosophy called *How to Do Things With Words*, a title Grossman played on with his *How to Do Things With Tears*. Try these things with tears, the poem suggests—throw up the hands during a dispute and call out for companionship, blurt out an ambiguous statement of human loneliness—attempt to preserve what is precious in the person, not the argument.

The poet Boileau is reported to have quipped, "Descartes has cut the throat of poetry." Beyond the implications of murder and voicelessness, there is in Boileau's remark the idea that the philosopher has blocked one of the body's main means of receiving the world. Thinking too much, the poet cannot breathe, cannot take the world in. And it is true: we feel strapped with a speculative and perceptive apparatus that sets us at a distance from the world. If we wish to have any chance with our surroundings, our household god must, as Stevens writes, "be one / That will not hear us when we speak: a coolness, / A vermilioned nothingness, any stick of the mass / Of which we are too distantly a part." It remains for humans to look, and to make, to place one stick of mass on top of another.

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Grossman's poetry has always been in danger of wrapping itself too tightly in its own cerebration, of obscuring its paths to the light we might share. His studies of obscurity are haunted by the threat of becoming obscure. But here the poem concludes with the mysterious image of the workman on the scaffold, an image that resists parsing and eludes logic, but which is evocative and maybe even satisfying to the searching and exhausted mind. As an image for a poem, the banner suggests welcome, salutation, a homecoming or a festival—at the very least a message that is itself a gift. And the "dizzy scaffold" suggests an unfinished structure, possibly a Tower of Babel that you build after the fall of the Tower of Babel, that is, by yourself.

The workman is both the creator and the stooge, the poet and the installation team, the embodiment of faith in communication and the figure on the edge of verbal expression. Grossman suggests that as long as someone—anyone—is making something, he is not alone. At the same time, if the workman is the poet himself, his proof of existence is his own making, impelled by the belief in its reception. Or the workman is the human who puts the final touches on God's creation, his "mark" being his signature, the "X" of the illiterate, the "Kilroy was here" of temporary presence—the completion by the ill and the unlucky of the final letters of a Torah scroll left, as was the custom, unfinished by the scribe. Or the image of the workman putting up the banner and marking it could be a sly metaphor for the sunset as seen by the poet in nature—the banner is the sky, the mark the color. In this case, the very existence of the created world and the beauty in it provide enough "ground" for the poet's faith. The great affirmation of Grossman's book, which he both endorses and doubts himself, is the possibility of introducing, by means of creation, faith into the skeptic's position.

Toward the end of *Descartes' Loneliness*, a voice commands the poet,

> Build a house for the sun,
> with a winding stair
> for the wandering light to go up and
> rest before labor.

It is the "winding stair" of Yeats' Thoor Ballylee, the sixteenth-century tower on the Cloon River which Yeats restored with "old mill boards and sea-green slates, / And smithy work from the Gort forge," lived in for twelve summers, and memorialized in his book *The Tower*: the "narrow winding stair" of "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory," and the "winding ancient stair" of "A Dialogue of Self and Soul." "I declare this tower is my symbol," Yeats wrote. "I declare / This winding, gyring, spiring treadmill of a stair is my ancestral stair." And Grossman's house will also symbolize his work: a place for the sun to rest before labor, in anticipation of a greater building, the illumination of what we have made, the infusion of it with life and visibility. "The final girlfriend of the western world," Grossman writes, "is light." In one of the last poems in his book, the poet receives a vision of mystical construction: "But now / on the / horizon / the ocean / thrusts up / a black tower." The tower is a kind of last structure in Grossman's series of scaffolds and staircases, as the book is a coda to Grossman's poetic project, an ultimate song: "No more. I'm at the end of all of it. / 'Allen, what is it like to be at the end?' "

The skyline of twentieth-century poetry has been pierced by numerous towers: Yeats' Thoor Ballylee; Hart Crane's last poem, "The Broken Tower"; the towers of Eliot's *Waste Land*, "upside down in air" and "tolling reminiscent bells." But the image that seems most fitting for Grossman is that of Simon Rodia's Watts Towers in Los Angeles. Over the course of decades, from 1921 to 1954, Rodia, an immigrant from southern Italy, built a complex of structures, two of which are almost a hundred feet tall, in a small lot along the Pacific Electric Car Railway Red Car tracks. He used hand tools, and decorated his structures with fragments of colored glass, chips of ceramic tile from the Malibu Pottery factory, and shells from the beach nearby. Rodia designed his towers so that the structure itself, steel pipes and rods wrapped with wire mesh and chicken wire, all of it coated in mortar, served as the scaffold for the next addition. The towers are said to be the tallest structures ever built by one man alone. Submitted to a stress test by the city in order to establish their safety, the towers not only withstood the pressure, they bent the testing instrument. "I had in mind to do something big and I did it," was Rodia's explanation. There is something of the poet, too, in the image of Rodia, laboring out back in the mornings and evenings, gripped by a vision that is incommunicable until realized and inexplicable when done, but which at the same time leaps centuries and echoes our moments of sway, pulling us up off the ground. ◆

Song: Infernal

I was lost in the middle of my life
when the planes hit the towers,
lost in the middle of my life
when the glass gods, one at a time, cowered

and fell, when a bomb of blue sky
exploded a bride where she stood—
I was lost in the middle of my life,
far from a leopard, far from a dark wood—

when the night clerk at Circle K
handed me back too much change,
I was lost in the middle of our life's way,
when an army of wings arranged

on flatbed trucks brushed past me on the road,
I was lost in the hallways of a glass dream,
trying to find my way out to the ground
turning in circles, crying secretly

in green languages, unknown even to me—
far from a lion, far from a dark wood—
with armfuls of fritos, and ribs, and iced tea,
and web pages circling through my blood.

There were wires all around, and siren wails
and people running about, bereft and intent
as I. I didn't know whether to stay still
and wait for my life to grow transparent

there in my chair, with the sprinklers overhead
like golden showers of sorrow
and emergency lights flashing red
up and down the hall

or whether to run madly from stairwell
to stairwell, kissing women's knees
and the foreheads of men, drunk on cries for help
beseeching and singing and weeping

entering one life after another
and leaping from each one. Yes, I
was lost in the middle of the tower
when I came upon my life.

SAM TAYLOR

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Washington Diarist

That Night

The leaves were not all that was changing in Lafayette Park. I had never before seen a patriotic mosh-pit, but I was gladly trapped in one outside the White House in the hours after Barack Obama's inexorable but still unimaginable victory. I had also never seen young people march on the White House in the cause of joy. But now hundreds of exhilarated students had put down their copies of Negri and Hardt and lucidly picked up American flags, and as they flowed in from Pennsylvania Avenue in the rainy night they sang "The Star Spangled Banner" and "God Bless America." I do not mean to exaggerate the beauty of the scene—it was also boorish and hormonal, and I doubt that there was a soul among the cheering, hoodied, text-messaging crowd who cared much about, say, what General Kayani told General Petraeus; but I would be lying, I would be hardened in precisely the way I do not wish to be hardened, if I did not report that the scene was beautiful. When they began to cry "USA! USA!", the jingoistic crudity of the chant was gone; and while they were finding their way to the ferocious assertion of the love of country that had been the trademark of their Republican counterparts, those same counterparts on the other side of the country, the ones now marooned in the Palin-Jindal-Hensarling primitivism, were disgracing John McCain, a lost but wrenchingly honorable man, by jeering at the mention of the new president's name. Americans who were not moved by what happened the other night were in some way un-American. A dry eye was a misinterpretation of American history.

There are moments when pure feeling is also intelligent feeling. When suddenly CNN revealed its wall-sized announcement of the outcome, I experienced a blissful and unembarrassed rush of racialism. Only a hologram of Frederick Douglass would have excited me more. In that instant, forgive me, all I cared to know about Barack Obama was his color. A man of mixed race—no, an African American—no, a black man—no, let us not forget the whole odious story, a Negro—was elected to the presidency of the United States. There could be no more definitive demonstration of the American system of possibility than this; none. The oldest and most plausible pessimism of all had been retired. I recognized that this was a triumph for all of us, but before it was a triumph for all of us it was a triumph for some of us, and I was happy for them, for my black brothers and sisters, before I was happy for me. They had borne so much and waited so long. On this night they had overcome. And so my happiness was quickly complicated by a solemn sensation of respect: what were the tears in my eyes compared to the tears in their eyes? According to Obama's ideal of inclusiveness, they were the ones being included in my American narrative; but somehow I felt also like I was being included in their American narrative, and I was honored to have a place in it. Their elevation elevated me, too. Equality is universal, but the paths to equality are particular. As we glorified our similarities, I bowed my head before our differences, which are blessings when they are not curses.

Many years ago I had an interesting disagreement with a writer for my pages, who concluded an essay with an observation about the joy of justice. I objected that justice cannot be accompanied by joy, because it is preceded by injustice. The consciousness of tragedy can be assuaged, but it cannot be eradicated. The morning after the epiphany in America, I remarked a little sheepishly to a friend that from the way I had surrendered to my emotions, you would think that my own ancestors were slaves. And then I saw it: I had surrendered to my emotions because my own ancestors *were* slaves. How can a Jew, I mean a Jewish Jew, not rejoice at the election of Barack Obama? Not politically, where the road ahead may be rough; but historically, spiritually. We, too, remember the pharaohs; and we, too, choose never to hate the world; and we, too, have a hope of being saved by America. Our path to freedom was simpler, of course: we did not seek our freedom in the society in which we were enslaved. But like the black community in America, the Jewish community in America is wrestling with the lucky but harsh dissonance between progress and memory. Our experience is discontinuous with the experience of our ancestors. Their ordeals are increasingly unrecognizable to us, and we do not possess a natural knowledge of their pressures and their pains. And as our identification with victims and martyrs becomes inexact and even preposterous, we may be tormented by the suspicion that contentment is a form of treason. That is why some among us caution us not to be fooled by America, and grimly proclaim that our adversity is our destiny. I expect that in the African American community there will soon arise similar fatalists, who will remind their brethren of the tenacity of prejudice, and instruct that an African American in the White House is not the solution to all of black America's problems. They will be right, but they will be wrong. Their reluctance to challenge the bleakness in their tradition damages their sense of the actual. But the presidency of Barack Obama represents the glittering culmination of the African-American gamble on America, and the grand repudiation of the lachrymosity that is one of the foundations of a minority's identity. It is hard, but it is heroic, to believe the best when you are regularly commemorating the worst.

I woke up the next morning still under the spell of solidarity and love. I decided to make the spell last. I gave away my tickets to a performance of some late Shostakovich quartets, because for once I was not interested in the despair. Instead I spent the day listening to the Ebonys and the Chi-Lites and the Isley Brothers. For lunch I went to Georgia Brown's for fried green tomatoes. A day of dopey symbols, I admit. But reality, or the rest of it, will have to wait. It will be back soon enough; and anyway the election of a black president is also an element of reality. My elation about the Obama presidency is not to be confused with my expectation of the Obama administration. But for now I will defer my fears and my anxieties, and revel in a fact. And if, in the words of Derek Walcott,

> this season lasted one moment,
> like the pause
> between dusk and darkness,
> between fury and peace,
> . . . for such as our earth is now,
> it lasted long.

Leon Wieseltier

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You deserve a factual look at . . .

The Economic Miracle of Israel

What does it mean to American investors?

Israel is a very small country – it is smaller by half than San Bernardino County in California. It would sink in Lake Michigan without a trace. It has barely 8 million citizens. It has been in existence for just 60 years. But it is an economic powerhouse.

What are the facts?

Steady Economic Growth. Ever since its creation in 1948, Israel has been involved in bloody warfare virtually without surcease. There were three or four "formal" wars, each of which Israel's enemies promised to be a "war of extermination." To use their favorite phrase, they vowed to "wipe Israel off the map." Fortunately, none of this came to pass. Despite its small size and small population and being vulnerable from all sides, Israel has prevailed in all those wars. And it has survived the several "intifadas" imposed on it by the Palestinians. Despite that and despite gathering in millions of refugees from all over the world and despite having over one million Muslim Arab citizens, who do not serve in the military and who are openly hostile to their country, Israel has developed into an economic and industrial power that is admired in the world.

Impressive statistics can be cited. Here are just a few: Israel's gross domestic product (GDP) was over $170 billion in 2006. That works out to a per-capita product of over $20,000. It compares favorably with most long-established established European countries and approaches that of the United States. The United States is Israel's most important trading partner. In the most recent year for which reliable statistics are available, two-way trade amounted to about $30 billion, representing a steady 10% yearly increase over the last several years. The principal exports from the United States include civilian aircraft, telecommunication equipment, semiconductors, and medical equipment. The two countries signed a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in 1985, and an Agricultural Trade Agreement (ATA) in 1996. Israel also has free-trade agreements with the E.U., Turkey, Jordan, and Mexico. Other free trade agreements are in negotiation.

Israel's main exports to the United States and the world at large are polished diamonds, electronic communication equipment, medical and scientific equipment, chemical products, agri-technology, and textiles.

A World Leader in Many Fields. In contrast to its Muslim enemies, who have virtually no indigenous industry, whose people are largely illiterate, but who have been blessed with natural riches through their almost limitless petroleum resources, Israel has virtually no natural resources. Its principal resource is its people's brain power. Israel's universities and technical schools are world-class, most outstanding among them Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Technion in Haifa, which is considered to be on the same level as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The energy and resourcefulness that have enabled Israel to absorb millions of immigrants and to convert a desolate land into one of green fields and modern cities are also reflected in Israel's economic development. Israel is a modern industrial state whose output encompasses some of the most advanced and sophisticated technology in the world. Its industry is concentrated in high technology and high-added-value products, based primarily on scientific and technological creativity and innovation.

> "The emerging nations and "third world countries" should take the economy of Israel as an example and attempt to emulate it."

Israel is a world leader in medical devices and medical electronics, military electronics, civilian and military aviation, agri-technology, telecommunications, computerized graphics, cellular telephones, microchip technology and voicemail technology, water technology and desalinization, and many others. It has 31 desalinization plants, including the largest in the world, located in Ashkalon. Warren Buffett, perhaps America's most astute investor has recently made a $4.5 billion investment in an Israeli company. When asked why he chose Israel as his first investment outside of the United States, he replied, "Some Americans came looking for oil, so they didn't stay in Israel. We came looking for brains, so we stayed in Israel." Scores of Israeli stocks are traded on NASDAQ. Next to Canada, Israel is by far the most represented country on that exchange.

Domestic tranquility, a western legal system, the full infrastructure of transportation, communication and utilities, but primarily its educated and motivated population make Israel attractive to foreign investors and industry.

Virtually all major hi-tech U.S. companies have installations in Israel, either manufacturing plants or research laboratories or both. Such companies as IBM, Digital Equipment, Intel, National Semiconductor, Motorola and many others have established plants in the industrial parks mushrooming around the country's academic institutions.

Israel's economy is vibrant and growing, and offers countless investment opportunities in industry, agriculture, real estate, tourism, commerce, science and medical R&D, and much more. The opportunities that abound for domestic and foreign investors are almost limitless. What this small country has accomplished in just 60 years and against all odds is truly amazing. The emerging nations and "third world countries" should take the economy of Israel as an example and attempt to emulate it.

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P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159
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Without slowing America's population growth, T. Boone's energy plan could be gone with the wind.

Americans agree that saving our environment depends on developing renewable energy sources. T. Boone Pickens, the legendary oil man, thinks energy from wind is part of the answer. We agree. But even the most brilliant energy plan will fail if we don't address our rapidly growing population. Simply stated, the larger our population, the more energy we consume. The more energy we need the more potential damage to the environment. It's a vicious cycle. Clearly, it is impossible to talk about environmental conservation without talking about population. And it is impossible to talk about population without talking about immigration. America's population is on a path to increase from 300 million to 400 million in just 30 years* if we do nothing. Most of that growth would be a result of immigration.** Historically our government has seen immigration policy as unrelated to energy and the environment. That needs to change now. It's time to consider how immigration influences total U.S. energy consumption and adjust immigration downward to levels that won't negate any progress we make on energy independence and environmental protection. If we don't, we're just blowing in the wind.

America's Leadership Team for Long Range Population-Immigration-Resource Planning

300 million people today, 400 million in just 30 years. Think about it.

American Immigration Control Foundation	Californians for Population Stabilization	Federation for American Immigration Reform	NumbersUSA	Social Contract Press
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